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Frau Talvj an Interpreter  
of German Culture in America

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FRAU TALVJ AN INTERPRETER OF GERMAN  
CULTURE IN AMERICA

BY

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A. B., University of Illinois 1910

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THESIS

Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the

Degree of

MASTER OF ARTS

IN GERMAN

IN

THE GRADUATE SCHOOL

OF THE

UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS

1911







UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS

THE GRADUATE SCHOOL

May 31 1991

I HEREBY RECOMMEND THAT THE THESIS PREPARED UNDER MY SUPERVISION BY

*Irma E. Voigt*

ENTITLED

*Frau Talvj - An Interpreter of  
German Culture in America*

BE ACCEPTED AS FULFILLING THIS PART OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE

DEGREE OF

*Master of Arts*

*Julius Fackel*  
In Charge of Major Work

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Recommendation concurred in:

Committee

on

Final Examination








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# I

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## Chapter I.

It is a generally acknowledged fact, to-day, that the German element in America has and always has had an influence in the social development of the country equal to that of the English element. If we turn back to the early years of the nineteenth century and study carefully the factors which made for the phenomenal all-around growth of these United States, we are surprised at the great number of names of prominent Germans who threw into the development of their adopted country the power, the energy, and the intelligence of a nation whose very name stands for steadiness, progress, and health. However, as Körner says in the introduction to "Das Deutsche Element", people have been prone to undervalue this German element, and to consider it only in the light of material or rather in the light of tools to be used to good advantage in developing a new land. I do not wish to claim that this element was not a tool, no finished product can be produced without tools; but I do claim that in addition to being a tool, this German element was also the skilled workman who knew best how to use his own tool.

Consider for a moment the innate characteristics of the Germans and especially the German emigrants, which make such a claim reasonable. Long before England or France had realized the leveling power of education, Germany had been brought to see it. The German emigrants, naturally, did not leave their ideas in regard to this in the mother country. With a determination and courage, which we must grant to the Germans, they came to this country under the leadership of their pastors and teachers, and began at once to establish them-



selves and prepare a place for others. The class of people that came from Germany was different from that which came from France or England. Among the German emigrants one does not find the overflow of prisons, nor the refuse of society. It is true one finds among them many political exiles, but men exiled for the most part because their views were in advance of the somewhat limited and handicapped form of government. Such men could not help but have the most unusual influence in the development of a democracy such as we proudly claim for the United States, to-day.

To-day, we stand a national unity with regard to our political institutions and the constitutional form of government. We have even developed certain national ideals; but from the standpoint of a national culture we are still in the process of development. Before this national culture can be evolved, the elements which are at work must be considered. We cannot realize the evolution nor aid in it unless we divide the composition into its elements, for we are different from nations which are racial units. In the case of such nations the national culture is a natural growth and unfolding of the very life of such nations. We of foreign birth receive this development in the form of literature, art, and music. In the case of a nation such as the American, a composite nation we may say, the national culture is due in large measure to a conscious effort on the part of the individuals of such a nation to combine the elements which are present. No composition can be perfect or natural unless all of the elements are brought into proper conjunction. Thus far the German element has not been considered in its proper proportion.





In the course of the nineteenth century more than five million Germans came to America. Among these five millions, especially after the Wars of Liberation, were many of Germany's greatest scholars and teachers. These men wove their strength and power into the very fiber of the material out of which has developed one of the foremost powers of the world socially, intellectually, and commercially. It is not necessary for the development of this thesis to go into detail about some of the most influential Germans who came to America and by the power of concentration, vitality and energy, both mental and physical aided in the development of a great country. The names of Karl Follen, Karl Beck, Franz Lieber, and others will live in the history of their adopted country. It is not fair, however, as one glances over the list of illustrious German-Americans, to fail to see the name of one who, although a woman, wrought with a finesse and delicacy peculiar to a woman, a powerful and deep-seated influence in America, both by her personality and by her writings and interpretations of German culture.

It will be my purpose by means of this study to lay the foundation, at least, for the claim that Frau Edward Robinson deserves to be enrolled among the foremost Germans of influence who having adopted this country made it the object of their highest effort and endeavor. Before her influence can be appreciated it will be necessary to trace her development. This tracing will at times take the form of outlines and summaries of some of her works, works which particularly show the evidence of keen perceptive ability and scientific interest. Her field of labor was so broad that as one





contemplates one wonders more and more at the peculiar way in which proper recognition has not yet crowned her name. When America stops to take breath in its wild and almost insane race for supremacy, it will look about and gradually gather together as one of its most sacred possessions a history of the influences which gave it the strength to run without fainting, to struggle without becoming exhausted. When this time comes, as it has in the case of all nations and as it will in the case of America, the influence of Frau Edward Robinson, better known, perhaps, by her nom-de-plume, Talvj, will stand forth resplendent in its modesty and subtlety.

Possessed of a remarkable mind, and imbued with an interest in mankind which, when found in an intellectual woman, expresses itself in a sympathy and influence which seems boundless, she gave to America the best there was in her to give. It seems strange that such a remarkable woman should be so little known, at least so little known as compared with the men who came to America and became a part of it. To be sure Mrs. Robinson never severed the bond which held her to Germany and after her husband's death she returned to Germany, in the fall of 1864. In one sense of the word it cannot be said that she became an American, for America at no time filled the place of Germany in her heart. But during the years from 1830 to 1863 she made herself a part of the country of her husband, not throwing herself into the limelight as an advocate of this, that, or the other radical movement, but rather entering those avenues of subtle influence for which women are best suited.

In the quiet nature of her influence all the modesty and subtlety of Goethe's spirit is shown. Goethe felt, as no other poet



who has ever lived, the importance of his mission to mankind; but in spite of this consciousness his method of fulfilling this mission was surrounded with a modesty and delicacy which are the wonders of the world. Agressiveness found no place in his nature, nor in the nature of any who were attracted to his circle. The attraction itself was so subtle and lacking in material glamor that it grew and possessed the soul of the individual as some great thought grows and possesses the mind. Such influence alone can be of the lasting kind, such influence alone can enter into the development of a national culture in such close combination that it can never again be separated. Modesty is the distinctive characteristic of German culture and Goethe stands as its highest representative. All of the spendid men and women who came under his protectorate were its representatives. Madame De Staël realized that no aggressive policy could infuse strength and energy into the veins of depleted France. With an attitude resembling very much that of reverence, she came to Weimar and the Goethe circle.

The fact that Mrs. Robinson, or Frau Talvj as we shall call her from this point forward, was not better known, or rather is not better known, is due, no doubt, in large measure to the fact that the Germans in America have not until very recently made any attempt to preserve the records of themselves as individuals. The Anglo-Saxon element has stood out boldly as distinctive through all the years, and a national pride has grown out of this which at times has threatened to swallow up and competely assimilate all other national claims. No one has seen fit, as yet, to gather together all bits of history and material which shall be visible evidence of Das Deutschtum in America. Such research and collection still offer interesting and profit-





able labor for the future. When this shall be done we may hope to see the name of Frau Talvj among the list of most eminent, and her influence credited with the power of the influence of a Follen, different, to be sure, in its scope and nature, but as great in its effects. There is no more subtle and intangible influence than that of personality or that effected by literature. In this age of commercialism we demand that which is bold and tangible. And yet withal in every phase of our complicated and manifold life we realize that a subtle, indefinable influence winds its path where a bold stroke could never succeed. Professor Goebel has expressed the idea of the subtle influence of the Germans very splendidly in his "Das Deutschtum in den Vereinigten Staaten". He says, "In die düster prosaische Lebensauffassung des Puritanismus hat der Deutsche den Frohsinn und die Poesie des Lebens getragen; in die trostlose Askese, die gesunde Sinnlichkeit, in den rohen Materialismus, die Schätzung der idealen Güter. Vom Deutschen konnte mancher Amerikaner lernen, dass Religion und Sittlichkeit nicht getrennte Gebiete sind."

Coming from the Goethe Circle, Frau Talvj had an unusual qualification for entering American society as an interpreter of German culture. No circle, perhaps, which the world has ever known has surpassed in its far-reaching effects that of the Goethe circle at Weimar. The best of German culture had through Goethe reached a perfection, a depth, and a breadth such as had not been reached before, nor has been reached since. This can be seen especially in the circle of remarkable women who gathered at Weimar, among whom were the Duchess of Weimar, Charlotta von Schiller, Carolina von Herder, Frau von Stein, Frau Talvj, and a number of court ladies. All of these



women were imbued with the spirit of Goethe. Goethe's women characters are the most perfect creations of any poet. They embody to a large extent the characteristics of the women who were in the Goethe circle. The Princess of Este in Tasso has never been equalled as a type of "die edle Frau". Into her mouth he places the results of his discussions with Frau von Stein. She, the Princess, embodies the ideal of "die innere Güte aus der allein alle Schönheit entspringt." In Frau Talvj's novel "Heloise" a description of her heroine expresses exactly the attitude of these noble women. We read, "Now only did Heloise learn to know the charm of intellectual, inciting, conversation; the invaluable advantage to be derived from hearing the interchange of ideas of superior minds. Heloise eager for information and susceptible of improvement as she was, felt deeply grateful toward Isabella for this distinction. The conversation turned on subjects taken from divers departments, belles-lettres, philosophy, history, political economy, but above all the great questions of the day. On all these Heloise heard persons of mind give and defend their views. She herself as was suitable to her youth was mostly a listener. But the careful education she had received had sufficiently developed her mind to enable her to say with the Princess of Este,

'I do rejoice when learned men are speaking,

That I full well can understand their meaning.' "

Goethe in his "Aufsätze zur Literatur" speaks of her in regard to her work with the Volkslieder der Serben as "ein Frauenzimmer von besondern Eigenschaften und Talenten." In another reference he mentions her in connection with Jakob Grimm and Wilhelm Gerhard





as one of "die drei von uns gerühmten Teilnehmer an diesem schönen Geschäft", meaning the Volkslieder der Serben. It is not at all strange that Goethe should speak about her or give her the most favorable criticism, for he was to an unusual degree conscious of the power of "das weibliche". Be that as it may, his very favorable attitude toward her places her beyond all question in a position which justifies the claim made for her as a power and influence in America.

Talvj, a name coined from the initial letters of her name, Theresa Albertina Louise von Jakob, was first used by her in 1825. She was the youngest daughter of the political science and philosophical writer Heinrich von Jakob. At the time of her birth, January 26, 1797, her father was Professor of Philosophy at the University of Halle. When Talvj was nine years old he accepted a call to the University of Charkow, a town in the southern part of Russia. It was really the political troubles which swept Germany that persuaded him to take this step. It was this same political unrest which wrought such an influence on Talvj miles away from her native land. In 1840 she wrote her autobiography, as it were, for the Brockhausischen Conversations-Lexikon. From this her own words illustrate best the awakening of "das deutsche Gefühl" together with what she considered the causes. She says, "Die fremdartigen, halb asiatischen, halb europäischen Zustände um mich her übten einen entschiedenen Einfluss auf mich aus. Sie und der Druck unter dem Deutschland damals seufzte .....weckten frühzeitig eine klare, feste Erkenntniss des Bessern in mir. Schon in meinem elften Jahre weinte ich oft vor Zorn und Schmerz über Deutschlands Unglück, und letzteres war auch meine erste Muse." During her stay of three years in Charkow her education advanced



slowly as far as instruction was concerned. In the University library she found among other books Eschenburg's "Beispielsammlung" and "Die Nachträge zu Sulzers Theorie der schönen Künste." She copied both of these books almost in their entirety. At the age of thirteen she accompanied her father to St. Petersburg, whither he had been called to aid in the revision of the Code of Criminal Laws. Here even the slight instruction she had been receiving ceased. In St. Petersburg she was thrown with people more, and was occupied with external conditions. However, she herself tells us, "Die innere Richtung blieb aber doch sehr ernst und sehnsuchtsvoll nach einem Etwas, das mir das äusere Leben nicht bot." Through the Russian war and the Wars of Liberation, then shaking Germany to its very foundation, her deepest and holiest emotions were aroused. She gave expression to these emotions in many lyric poems, but to publish them would have been a profanation of her inmost feelings. Intensely studious by nature and mistress of her time she wrote and read "unendlich viel". History particularly appealed to her.

In 1816 her dearest wish was fulfilled, namely, to return to Germany, which she had learned to love with a tenderness and depth of feeling such as few possessed who had not been away from it. She never lost this loving loyalty, even when she came to America as the wife of Edward Robinson. She did not know Germany when she left it as a child of nine years; she knew it and loved it when she returned as a girl of sixteen. For the next five years she continued to write poetry and also a few short stories. The same unwillingness to publish her works remained. In 1821, because of the need of a little "pin-money" she translated several of Sir Walter Scott's novels, "Old Mortality" and "Black Dwarf". She herself says that she did it quite





against inclination. For the same reason, that of obtaining a little extra money, she wrote some critical reviews for literary magazines, for the most part under the title of "Briefe eines Frauenzimmers über mehrere Erscheinungen der Literatur." She enjoyed this latter work very much.

In 1823 she suffered her first real sorrow, the death of a dearly beloved sister. It was at this time that Jakob Grimm's criticism of Servian Volkslieder came to her attention, and largely in an endeavor to forget her sorrow, she interested herself deeply in the study of the language. She soon mastered it and set about translating some of these songs under Goethe's Protectorate in Halle. At this time she did not consider publishing them, but was anxious to find occupation<sup>and</sup> as she said, "Ich wollte Goethe erfreuen, von dem ich alle mögliche Aufmunterung erfuhr." In his "Aufsätze" Goethe speaks of her as being peculiarly fitted to translate the Servian Volkslieder because of a knowledge of the Slavic language gained during an earlier sojourn in Russia. In a letter written to her April 25, 1824, Goethe says, "Dass Ihre gehaltvolle Sendung einem eifrig gehegten Wunsche glücklich entgegenkommt will ich nur, mein theures Fräulein, mit wenigen Worten aussprechen und mich nächstens weiter erklären, wie ich irgend eine Ausgabe Ihrer Bemühungen eingeleitet zu sehen hoffen mag." On May 11 among other things he wrote to her, "Fahren Sie ja in Ihren schönen Bemühungen fort und seien Sie überzeugt, dass diese Arbeit, insofern Sie mein besonders dabei gedenken, doppelt wert ist, einmal als Zeugniß Ihres Wohlwollens, und sodann weil ich wünsche, dass diese Nationalschätze nur in Masse vor's Publicum gebracht werden, mit gehörigen topographish-geographischen, mythologisch und historischen



Einleitungen, auch mit genugsamen Noten, wie sie deren schon zweckmässig angefügt haben." Throughout her work on these Volkslieder Goethe manifested the greatest interest. As said before, he felt her peculiar qualification for the work. Not only did he aid her by urging her on, but also by valuable criticism of some of her translations, as we see by his letter to her of August 2. After assuring her that his interest in her success is great and lasting, he makes certain suggestions in this and that poem in regard to changing a word or phrase and in some instances gives her his interpretation of the thought. Evidently, from his letter, she has discussed the matter of publishing her work. He says, "Was den Druck betrifft wüsste ich mich nicht für den Augenblick zu entscheiden. Es kommt darauf an, dass Sie einen billigen Ersatz für Ihre Bemühung erhalten; lässt sich der von Wien erwarten, so wäre ..... Lassen Sie uns darüber in der Zwischenzeit nachdenken und nach forschen." In response to her next communication with him wherein she sends him a perspective of the whole work, he assures her that his astonishment and interest had only increased. He urges her on with the words, "Gehen Sie den eingeschlagenen Weg fort, so kann nur daraus Erfreuliches entstehen; mögen Sie bei der Herausgabe meiner freundlich gedenken, so wird es mir sehr angenehm sein. .... Möchten Sie mir in der Folge das reine Manuscript zusenden so will ich gern gewisse kleine Bemerkungen mittheilen; sobald die Hauptsache richtig ist, so lässt sich mit frischem Blick im Einzelnen gar manches gefällige nachhelfen." In this letter also of September 8, he discusses further with her the publication of the work. Through Goethe's aid, and also through the helpful criticism of some Servian friends, the first volume was





ready in 1825. In 1826 the second volume appeared. The work was received with the greatest interest and approval by the best and most prominent of the German nation, a circumstance from which Frau Talvj tells us she derived great pleasure and satisfaction. Through this work of translation she gained the lasting friendship of Goethe, as well as a near acquaintance with Jakob Grimm, William and Alexander von Humboldt, and others. The very fact, that Goethe the very highest literary tribunal should have taken the trouble to aid her by proof reading, suggestions as to publication, and suggestions as to use of words, is the highest proof of her literary possibilities.

In 1828 she married Edward Robinson, a professor of theology at Andover. America was a new world to her in all respects and it was only gradually that she succeeded in accustoming herself to it. Her coming to America formed, as it were, a link between German and American culture. She brought from Germany the idea of universality, and in all of the articles and reviews written during her life here, this idea stood out prominently. She worked as few other writers have done, for the adjustment of the two languages, German and English. With an interest and mental energy peculiar to her, she busied herself very shortly after her arrival with a study of the language of America's primitive people. A review of this will appear in a later chapter. It was a transfer, we may say, from her scientific investigation of the Servian Volkslieder to an investigation of the Indian poetry. Up to the time of Heckerwelder the Indian had been regarded as being on almost the same footing as the animals. In fact humanity in his case was less often practiced than in the case of animals. Heckerwelder looked upon the Indian as human and was not afraid to



express his views, however great the storm of criticism which broke over his head. Then Frau Talvj came with the same view and soon published an essay about the Indian and his language. This essay appeared in 1834. So far I have been unable to obtain it, but another essay on the Indian which appeared in her book "Characteristik der Volkslieder" brings out clearly her attitude. To her German instinct and nature, conclusions drawn from superficial observations were useless. She saw in the life and customs of the original peoples the seed of the present growth and future development. She saw more in the Indian than a painted savage. She realized, as so many do not, that in order to get the real motives and ambitions of a people, we must seek for them in their language; for language is the outgrowth and development of the life of a people and not a commodity made to order.

From 1837 to 1840 she visited in Germany while her husband made a tour of investigation to Palestine. During her stay in Germany she published several works dealing with Volkslieder. Frau Talvj, as will be shown later, seemed to possess a peculiar aptitude for the study of popular poetry. Hers was a study of that which sprang from the people and that which lived with them. In the naïveté of popular poetry she saw the germs of future development. In this naïveté she saw the very life-springs of the nation. In popular poetry lay the real history and in such history lay the possibilities of the present and of the future. History to her was not a chronicle of events but rather the results of definite causes; and these definite causes originated with the people who were the ancestors of the present. There is no question but that her already





broad interest in mankind was broadened and enlarged through these studies; for in studying the poetry of France, Spain, Germany, Sweden, Denmark, Servia, Holland, and other countries, her life was touched by the ideas and ideals of the peoples. As we review in the following chapter her work in some of these fields, we will appreciate more fully the keenness and directness with which she discovered sources. Others have studied the Volkslieder of the different nations and have given to the world the results of such study, but, personally, I have a different feeling of certainty and truth after reading the results of Frau Talvj's study than I have from reading the works of others. Perhaps this is due in a measure to the fact that one is filled with the greatest respect for her ability after a study of her life. She is so simple and unassuming that at no time is it artificial shine which demands such respect. That she sought the truth always, we are unconsciously brought to realize, and this unconscious realization engenders confidence. We instinctively feel that her study of the Volkslieder was for no other purpose than to discover real sources of culture and development. We instinctively trust her statement of results even if she is not listed as an authority. Her treatment of the work is not of such a technical nature as to be out of the comprehension of all her readers, and because she speaks of simple folk in simple language we believe and enjoy what she says. During the years <sup>from</sup> 1837 to 1840 she also published a short sketch entitled "Ossian not Genuine". This aroused much comment and opposition, but she remained unshaken in her views. At the time Edward Robinson went to Palestine he was made Professor of Biblical Literature at the Union Theological Seminary in New York. He held this position until his



death which occurred January 27, 1863. Upon her husband's return from Palestine in 1840, Frau Talvj returned to America. Her tendencies had always been in the direction of research into national pasts. With renewed zeal she applied herself to American history and in 1847 brought out a "History of Captain John Smith". Her study of the Indians came into good use in preparing this history. The same year she published "The Colonization of New England". This is a history of New England written from a German viewpoint for German readers. Her unwillingness to draw conclusions from surface deep conditions is again shown in this. Her logical method of procedure from cause to effect makes many facts of early New England history much more appealing and real than the majority of histories which merely state facts in chronological order. This phase of her literary activity will be the subject of a later chapter.

For some time she had practically departed from the field of poetry, but now, through her acquaintance with Washington Irving, she again turned her attention to poetry and the novel. Her activity as a writer of scientific and historical articles did not cease, however. Many such articles were published in American and German periodicals. After the death of her husband she returned to her beloved Germany and lived there until her death in 1870.

Frau Talvj may justly be called one of the most important writers of her sex. She objected to being considered "eine gelehrte Frau" only, for this was not the goal of her ambition. She strove to awaken love and confidence and this she did through her genuinely human and sympathetic nature, a nature entirely free from pettiness and untruth, thoroughly feminine. She loved youth and was





perfectly at home with young people. In her case we see one of the strongest instances of a conscious struggle against growing narrow. She always had broad interests. Unlike many women, she took a keen interest in the political conditions in Germany and in America. This interest, however, did not lead her to assume an attitude, which could ever be criticised for being bold and unwomanly. She knew a woman's place and, although endowed with unusual powers, she held herself always within the boundaries of that place. A glimpse of her attitude toward her home draws us even more closely to her. It was a matter of pride with her that she never turned her attention to her writing or study until she had put her house in order for the day.

In the following chapters three phases of her literary activity will be considered, her work with popular poetry, her novels, and her history. The second chapter will consist of four parts: A- Teutonic Popular Poetry; B- Slavic Popular Poetry; C- Spanish and French Popular Poetry; D- Poetry of the Original Inhabitants of America. In order to give an adequate idea of the character of her work, for the present, not much more than a review of some of her articles will be given in this chapter. At a later time a comparison with other works of similar nature will be made with special investigation as to originality of ideas and methods.



## Chapter II.

## Popular Poetry.

Popular poetry is not the dowry of a few blessed individuals; by it we mean that general productiveness which pervades the mass of men as it pervades Nature. Among the nations of Europe it is a dying plant; here and there a lonely relic is discovered among the rocks, preserved by the invigorating powers of the mountain air. But for the most part civilization has ruthlessly swept it from its path, and in the future we may expect to find merely dried specimens preserved between two sheets of paper and securely guarded in a cabinet. This is the thought Frau Talvj expresses in an introduction to an article on Slavic Popular Poetry in the North American Review for 1836.

Addison in numbers seventy and seventy-four of the Spectator expressed his admiration for the popular ballad of Chevy-Chase. He viewed it not as a curiosity, merely, but as a work of art and inspiration and discovered and set forth passages in it similar to passages found in Virgil, Homer, and Milton. However, he did not have the remotest idea that true and worthy successors of these bards existed almost as neighbors to him. The credit and honor of having made this discovery belongs to Germany and primarily to Herder. One of the greatest discoveries of the eighteenth century is the discovery of the true conception of popular poetry, which was destined to create a new epoch in the history of the intellectual development of the world. In saying it was discovered in the eighteenth century, I do not mean to imply that it was entirely disregarded up to this





time. On the contrary, as early as the sixteenth century an interest in the poetry of peoples farthest removed from civilization was awakened. It was just this very interest in popular poetry which formed the great distinction between Roman and German literature. The former was exclusive and aristocratic in character, sharply separated from the people and inaccessible for the most part to them. The latter, however, was popular and democratic. To be sure, during epochs when Roman influence ruled, German literature became less popular and democratic; every sympathy for the people was lost and Germany suffered under the artificiality of it all. Strength and rejuvenation were discovered again in the popular poetry, that blossom of all literature. It was during the second half of the eighteenth century that the return was made in England as well as in Germany; in England under the name of "Return to Nature", in Germany in the so called "Sturm und Drang".

In order to understand this movement we must have a scientific basis for it. As indicated, as early as the sixteenth century an interest in the life, thoughts, songs and emotions of remote nations was awakened. At that time, as also in the eighteenth century, this interest was the outgrowth of over-civilization. In Nature and among her true sons the remedy was sought. Montaigne during the latter half of the sixteenth century found this lost element of nature among the uncivilized tribes of South America. From these tribes the interest advanced to the half civilized people on the borders of Europe, and thus gradually drew in closer and closer until the interest centered finally, on the part of Herder, in the popular poetry of the peasant class in his immediate vicinity. In England the same movement took place and the final center of interest became Scotland.



This occurred in 1765 when Percy's Relics of Ancient Poetry appeared. He had comprehended Montaigne's ideas and saw in them a method of improving public taste.

To Herder we owe the greatest debt of gratitude for pushing this movement. His idea was to penetrate by the study of popular poetry of all nations to the innermost nature of man and by a knowledge and insight into this nature to restore a balance for civilization. To him we are indebted for the word "Volkslied," for which we have no adequate English word. "Volk" to him meant the eternal source of all that was new and original. To-day, largely through the influence of the French Revolution "Volk" has the added attribute of political. Nature had to be won back, not nature in the abstract as some enthusiasts<sup>like Rousseau</sup> understood, but nature the genuinely national as manifested in her children. This is a problem of our age and for America as well as for any country of Europe. We cannot hope to find the solution of the problem in the universities nor in the scientific treatises of modern problems. We cannot hope to solve it by a conscious effort at manufacturing a literature. Such an effort was made in America during the last half of the eighteenth and first half of the nineteenth centuries. The effort to create an American literature was in itself most laudable but, with the exception of Longfellow perhaps, the men most interested failed to see the value of popular or unconscious poetry as a corrective against the dangers of overconscious production. At the time Frau Talvj wrote her articles on Popular Poetry for American Magazines little was known in America of this movement. Imbued with Herder's ideas on this she quietly and modestly made use of the opportunity to





strengthen and help develop the movement by writing a series of articles on the popular poetry of the Teutonic, Slavic, French, and Spanish nations. Her comparative study of the popular poetry of the different nations up to the present time stands by itself and in a class by itself. Preeminently endowed by nature with a keen mind, a scientific attitude, and broad sympathies, she obtained the distinction of being an authority in this line. Herder himself never made such a comparative study and certainly in America we cannot find anything resembling it. Longfellow felt the power and strength of the movement and in a small way made a slight study of popular poetry. Previous to 1836 there appeared in the North American Review an article by him on "Moral and Religious Poetry of Spain". His real appreciation for German popular poetry, especially, came after Talvj's articles on Teutonic and Slavic poetry appeared. This appreciation on the part of Longfellow we find expressed in his "Hyperion" which appeared in 1839. The two articles by Talvj which were just mentioned appeared in 1836 in volumes forty-two and forty-three of the North American Review. This was, as said before, the first attempt at a comparative study of this kind either in Europe or America. Upon her arrival in America the conscious effort at manufacturing an American literature was in full swing. By this means, in her modest way, without, in any place, referring to this conscious effort and its dangers she gave to the American public through the pages of its most popular magazine a corrective against the dangers of overconscious production. It was of the highest importance that this corrective should come just at this time and in the modest way in which it did. America's conscious effort has not yet succeeded in producing an



American literature and much of the present product bears the stamp of unreality and artificiality. The most typically American is that which strikes closest at the life and customs of nature's own -- the mass of the people.

Hildebrand tells us that it is almost impossible to give a definition of popular poetry which shall be comprehensive. Wilhelm Grimm calls popular poetry or the poetry of nature a "mighty stream which advances, dashing and foaming with its own living pulses, and slowly rolls on to traverse the whole land;" while he says of the poetry of art, it is like "the ornamental aqueduct which forces the waters of the living stream through narrow pipes and causes them to rise in jets or fall in artificial cascades." Storm in his "Immensee" puts into the mouth of Reinhard a beautiful definition of popular poetry. Reinhard says in speaking of Volkslieder: "Sie werden gar nicht gemacht; sie wachsen, sie fallen aus der Luft, sie fliegen über Land wie Mariengarn, hierhin und dorthin, and werden an tausend Stellen zugleich gesungen. Unser eigenstes Tun und Leiden finden wir in diesen Liedern; es ist als ob wir alle an ihnen mitgeholfen hätten." Frau Talvj, however, gives one which it seems to me contains the kernel of the whole movement which Herder, Goethe, Schiller, and she herself fostered and promoted. She says, "The productions proceed from the common people; they are the blossoms of popular life born and nurtured under the care of the people, cherished by their joys and watered by their tears; and as such eminently characteristic of the great mass of the nation and its condition." Because Europe has an abundance of popular poetry and has made a scientific study of much of it, it stands, she says, in a superior position among other continents of the world.





## A. - Teutonic Popular Poetry.

Although we find similarities in the popular poetry of all nations, it can be shown that these similarities exist not because of a borrowing but because of similar innate characteristics of all human nature. Throughout all poetry we find certain terms repeated again and again to express certain ideas. The perception of rhythm can be traced even in the poetry of the most savage tribes. All nations use riddles as a test of sagacity. Another similarity found in all popular poetry is the belief in an omnipotent Providence and his retributive justice. To show that these similarities are not borrowed, let us compare two popular ballads of countries entirely different in situation and character. One taken from the low German has as its theme the horrible<sup>murder</sup> of an innkeeper's beautiful daughter by three robbers. It ends:

"And where there fell a drop of blood,  
A year an angel singing stood;  
And where the murderer put his sword,  
A year a raven sat and croaked."

The other is a Servian ballad which has as its theme the murder of a husband's young and beautiful sister occasioned by the jealousy of his young wife. It ends:

"But where'er a drop of blood fell from her,  
There a flower sprung up, a fragrant floweret;  
Where her body fell when dead and mangled,  
There a church arose from out the desert."



The ballads of the various nations seldom end without poetic justice being performed. The belief that trees and flowers planted on graves are animated by the souls of the dead buried therein is a common belief.

The connection between Teutonic nations is proved by their common superstitions, the frequent appearance of supernatural beings, and their lively interest in human affairs. A belief in a class of spirits of diminutive size forming a race is scattered throughout Great Britain, the three Scandinavian empires, and all of Germany. The names applied to them have their origin in the earliest times of paganism. With Christianity evil traits and characteristics were applied to them. This world of spirits was a fanciful creation of a wild popular imagination. The legends in connection with them give to us, situated as we are, in the midst of intellectual advancement, a peculiar poetic charm. Contemporaneously, we find the exploits of the heroes of the Edda sung in the north, in Germany, and even as far south as Italy. Even the meaningless nursery rhymes exist contemporaneously in Great Britain and Germany.

#### Danish Popular Poetry:

The life of the Scandinavians was wild, warlike, and full of action or exactly interspersed with days of idleness and perfect rest. During long winter nights they had much time to think of their ancestors and the piratical adventures connected with them, hence their wealth in epic poetry. To be sure it was rude and primitive and the form was often entirely neglected, but withal it was full of the vigor and strength of youthful life unrestrained and untamed.





In this poetry we find no lyric effusions, no lengthy descriptions.

### Swedish Popular Poetry:

More than two-thirds of the popular ballads were possessed in common by the Danes and the Swedes. The greater poetical nature of Sweden created among the people many local traditions attached to hills and mountains. In both countries there was found a belief in the power of music. All of the popular music was simple; the melodies moved among a few notes. The impression gained from the whole was that of strength. The Swedish melodies especially were distinguished by exquisite sweetness, all without exception being in the minor keys.

### German Popular Poetry:

German imagination peopled the hills and forests, mountains, castles, and rivers with spirits of various descriptions. There is no doubt that these tales are real popular poetry. In some regions around the Harz mountains the belief still exists, that an infant must be carefully guarded until after baptism lest it be stolen or exchanged. German love for poetry and song has come down through the ages. While the great national epic "Das Niebelungen Lied" was, perhaps, not known by the common people, still it is quite certain that the traditions on which it was founded were current among them. <sup>The</sup> Hildebrandslied is decidedly popular and <sup>hero</sup> its is one of the heroes of the Niebelungen. Many of the minnesongs seem to have <sup>equally</sup> been known to high and low. Many of them known as dancing songs



were composed to accompany dances at public festivals. Dancing and poetry among <sup>the</sup> Germans was and is yet intimately connected. As a result of this universal love for poetry and song a spirit of cheerfulness and enjoyment was found throughout the country. However, these universally popular songs were not considered worthy of preservation in printed form. As a consequence during the fourteenth century the naive character of German poetry was lost in artificiality. This artificiality did not affect the people and we may say, in direct opposition to this artificiality there blossomed forth the Volksgesang, among which were found especially the songs of miners. But even from this period, whatever reached posterity reached it through tradition in greatly altered form. The songs of the Reformation, in a way, may be considered popular. After the introduction of printing, books of a popular character appeared occasionally, but the popular tendency was utterly crushed by the Thirty Years' War. Gradually the tone of the common people rose above the prevailing immorality and rudeness, and in the first half of the seventeenth century the so called educated poets had a more popular character than ever before. This popular tendency was again destroyed by the French influence which began to operate on German thought. False imitation and affectation which is never found among the common people caused them to seek other avenues of recreation. Popular dramatic representations arose. The French influence and imitation did not permeate to the Volksschauspiele. They held their own and up to the nineteenth century appeared as puppet shows and exhibitions given by itinerant players at country fairs. As the Germans have





changed from a singing to a reading people, popular poetry has declined.

The chief feature of German popular poetry consisted in its universality. In variety of form and subject it was unequalled by any other nation. It had in common with the English a joyful and deep sense of nature and its divine beauties; with the Scotch, a cordial and profound feeling; with the Scandinavian, condensed and dramatic representation. In playful imagination it surpassed all. In many instances a peculiar naiveté makes it absolutely untranslatable.

Dutch popular poetry no longer exists. They possess ballads in common with Northern Germany. However, their Bible ballads are exclusively theirs.

#### B. - Slavic Popular Poetry.

Among the nations of the Slavic race alone the living flower of popular poetry is still to be found. As yet Slavic popular poetry has no history. The wonderful tales have been handed down in legend or song, especially in Servia the fountain of poetry. Handed down from generation to generation each has in turn left its own distinctive stamp. The Slavic from the earliest mention appear as a singing race. Procopius in the third book of "De Bello Gothico" tells that at one time the Greeks surprised a Slavic camp buried in sleep, having been lulled to slumber by singing. In another reference to the Slavi we learn of three prisoners of war who carried



guitars instead of weapons. They were a peaceful people being unaccustomed to the use of swords and spears. Shaffarik says, "Where a Slavic woman is, there is also song." Among no other European nation is natural poetry as extant. It abounds in purity, heartiness, and warmth. The purity and universality, however, with which the popular poetry has been preserved is due largely to the barrenness of their literature and the utter ignorance of the common people.

In the love songs of the Slavic nations we do not find romance, which is the blossom of Christianity among Teutonic races. The love expressed in the Slavic love songs is the outpouring of the tender affections and the glowing sensuality of the human breast. In their heroic songs we do not find the element of chivalry. The heroism of the Slavic nations is the heroism of manly strength, not the heroism of honor. In these nations we find in combination the East and West, the North and South; "the suppleness of Asia and the energy of Europe; the passive fatalism of the Turk and the active religion of the Christian; the revengeful spirit of the oppressed, and the childlike resignation of him who cheerfully submits -- all these seeming contradictions find an expressive organ in Slavic popular poetry." Its morality is pure; the passion for revenge and violence expressed is atrocious. In speaking of her former work with Servian poetry in 1825, Frau Talvj says, "It was on account of this decidedly exotic character of Slavic popular poetry, when the Servian popular songs were first published in German, Goethe considered it as an advantage, that the work of translation had fallen into the hands of a lady. Only a female mind, the great poet thought, was capable





of the degree of accommodation requisite to clothe the barbarian poems in a dress in which they could be relished by readers of nations foreign to their genius. Even the love songs, although of the 'highest beauty' he thought could only be enjoyed en masse."

The Slavic popular songs have nothing, or very little of the bold dramatic character which animates the Scotch, German, and Scandinavian ballads. A slight dramatic element is found in the Russian songs. In these a sort of negative antithesis occurs frequently which seems to presume a preceding question, as for example:

"Not a falcon floateth through the air,  
Strays a youth along the river's brim."

Again:

"Not a cuckoo in the forest cool doth sing,  
Not in the garden sings a nightingale;  
In the prison dark a brave youth sighs,  
He sighs and pours out many parting tears."

The Slavic ballads seldom pretend to portray a whole story; they portray merely a scene leaving the rest to the imagination. Likewise they seldom represent wild passions or complicated actions, but rather scenes of rest and of domestic joy or grief. Their songs are plastic. Friederick Schlegel's definition of architecture, "frozen music", applies to many of the Slavic songs. They defy translation.

In the songs of all Slavic nations conversing, talking,



sympathizing animals are found. This is a distinctive characteristic. We even find an instance of a horse weeping. All inanimate objects are imbued with speech and human sympathies; the stars talk to each other and to the moon; the sun speaks and acts. The connection with the popular poetry of the rest of the world seems looser than in the case of the Teutonic nations. Their poetry does not deal with a world of spirits, nor does it use as its theme the returns of the spirits of the dead. We find but one instance of such a return and that is in the Servian tale "Jelitzka and her Brother". The same ballad is found among the Greeks and it is logical to suppose that this ballad became known in Servia through the Greek. The contradictions brought into the countries wherein Christianity conquered are not found in Servia. History relates that the Servians received Christianity with child-like submission, principally because their superiors adopted it. Hence we do not find the contradictions growing out of a struggle to reconcile opposing elements.

In moral character Slavic poetry is for the most part pure and chaste. In some Russian songs the naiveté is scarcely half-veiled sensuality, and in some Servian songs there is marked levity and frivolity. Goethe saw in these songs a rather striking resemblance to the songs of the most practiced of all nations, the French. The former, however, are the overflowing of wild and unrestrained youth, rather than the fruits of dissoluteness of manners as is the case with the latter. "They are often coarse but never vulgar, they are indelicate, but they are not impudent."

Love and heroism, the two main themes of popular poetry,





are kept more separated among the Slavi than among other nations. Slavic heroism is never animated by romantic love. Maternal tenderness is the subject of very many songs and of all loves it is the greatest and tenderest. The rights of a mother are always respected. Another distinct Slavic characteristic is the relation between sister and brother. Not to have a brother is considered almost a disgrace. What has been said thus far applies to Slavic poetry in general. A few characteristics are specific.

#### Russian Popular Poetry:

According to the best Russian authorities even their oldest ballads cannot be traced further than to the last quarter of the sixteenth century; and the number is small. The fact that historical events give rise to much popular poetry makes the conclusion logical that much ancient poetry has been lost. One circumstance in itself insures the statement that the Russians have always been a singing race. That circumstance is their custom of attaching verses full of allusions and sacred meaning to every extraordinary event of human life. They have, even to-day, their wedding songs, Pentecost and Christmas carols, and various other songs named for the different occasions of festivals. The Russian songs are full of caressing epithets corresponding in a measure to the German diminutives used as terms of endearment. The poetry may be called melancholymusical. The national music, even, has an element of melancholy in it. An attractive and melancholy sweetness seems to pervade the melodies whose birth seems uncertain. They just grew.



A distinctively Russian trait of character is observed in their poetry, namely, a blind submission and veneration for their sovereign. This feeling is religious in nature in as much as the Czar is also the head of the Orthodox Church.

#### Servian Popular Poetry:

"With nations as with individuals poetry is to the greater part, at most, a holiday pleasure, which has little to do with the reality of every day employment." In the case of the Servians, however, their poetry is intimately a part of their daily life. Song accompanies every kind of business and frequently relates to it. The Servian lives his poetry. The distinctive characteristic is cheerfulness pervading all of the poetry, which is like a serene sky disturbed only now and then by some domestic lamentation. Love is a prevailing theme.

#### Polish Popular Poetry:

The Poles have neglected their popular poetry. They have no ancient ballads of importance; and many little songs scattered here and there have never been collected.

#### Slovak and Bohemian Popular Poetry:

These people and especially the Slovaks who inhabit the northwestern part of Hungary are considered the direct descendants of the first Slavic settlers of Europe. In spite of being a part of the Hungarian nation for over a century the Slovaks have preserved their language and many of their customs. The original Slavic





type is very much effaced from the poetry of both of these nations. The Germans especially have exercised a decided influence upon both. Only in Russian and Servian poetry the genius of Slavic poetry lives in its primitive purity.

### C. - Spanish and French Popular Poetry.

In the North American Review of 1842 there appeared an article by Frau Talvj on the Popular Poetry of France. In Putnam's of 1853 there appeared an article by her on the Popular Poetry of Spain. Both of these articles show the keen insight and scientific interest displayed in the articles already reviewed.

#### Spanish Popular Poetry:

The glory of no other nation is so intimately interwoven with poetry and song as that of the Spanish. Any translation of Spanish poetry is difficult, in as much as the melody and harmony of the Spanish have seldom found counterparts in other languages. Most of the Spanish popular romances have no record of author nor time of origin. All are mixed with poetry of all kinds. The only romances ever printed separately are those relating to Cid. The Historical Romances were sometimes written separately. The real history of Spanish popular poetry does not begin until the latter half of the fourteenth century. Teutonic influence soon corrupted the pure Latin into a different idiom. For centuries the Provençal of France was used and preferred at the Spanish court. Perhaps this very indifference to the native language made the Spanish romances



which did arise more strictly popular.

Spain was preeminently a romantic nation and however romantic and chivalrous in character many of the ballads were they are nevertheless real history. The deeds of Charlemagne and his twelve peers and the combats with the Moors are chronicled for us in the ballads. In one series of ballads the facts relating to the Invasion of the Arabs, the Crime of King Roderigo, and the treason of Count Julian are portrayed. In a second series are found the history and exploits of Bernardo del Carpio; in a third, the achievements of Fernando Gonzalez the founder of Castilian power; in a fourth, the adventures and destinies of the family of Lara; in a fifth, the exploits of Cid or Roderigo de Bivar. In the fourteenth century a new series began which pertained to the wars with the Moors and the final conquest of Granada. To be sure not all of these romances were true to history, however, they reflected truly the customs, morals, character, and disposition of the age and nation; and from no nation was there a brighter, nobler, and more admirable reflection. Whatever coarseness and roughness was portrayed belonged to the age and not to the nation. As a nation the Spanish possessed the traits of generosity, fidelity, magnanimity, and exalted loyalty. The Spanish historical romances were unequalled in the popular poetry of any other nation; they were more perfect in form than any contemporaneous productions due, perhaps, to a peculiar simplicity and naiveté. The general estimate has made the Spaniards grave and somber; but, on the contrary, their popular poetry proved that they were loquacious and sportive. The world of fairies whether Oriental or





Northern had slight influence on Spanish poetry. With them as with the Germans song and dance went hand in hand.

### French Popular Poetry:

In her study of French popular poetry Frau Talvj discovered the strange condition that a vast mine of poetry had been concealed for centuries; that the very origin of the language had been in darkness. A veritable lyric fever prevailed in France among the upper classes. Whether or not this lyric fever penetrated to the common people could not be discovered from history. Philosophy would argue that the climate and general ease of living must have produced poets of all ranks. Through repetition and imitation of the Troubadours the songs must have spread among all classes. Frau Talvj was unable in 1853 to write a history of French popular song. The documents were yet to be searched out. From the names of the fairies in French romances the conclusion was reached that the dwarfs and giants, the good and bad spirits so abundant in France, must have been creatures of northern origin and growth. The only portion of French literature which could be assumed to be strictly popular were the so-called Mysteries and Moralities, a species of dramatic composition brought in by the pilgrims, who began to perform religious dramas and gradually to intermingle the religious compositions with burlesque scenes. When Charles VI. came to Paris the pilgrims furnished a share of the solemnities. They called their society a fraternity; the dramas which they performed bore the name of Mysteries. They included the history of Jesus Christ which



gradually led the fraternity to call itself "La Confrairie de la Passion". In competition with these Mysteries, the official directors brought out the so-called Moralities, which were nearly the same thing under another name. Small comedies of genuinely popular nature grew out of these in as much as they were not limited by religious considerations. The theater became very popular in France. With the beginning of the sixteenth century French literature ceased to be popular, except in the fairy tales.

#### D.- Original Inhabitants of North America.

When Frau Talvj came to America she soon transferred her scientific interest, which had been aroused by Grimm's criticism of the "Volkslieder der Serben" and developed by her work with the same Volkslieder, to the early inhabitants of America. Aside from a merely scientific interest we must presume that Frau Talvj hoped by such a study to place a guard, modestly and subtly, against an artificiality of over conscious production. William Grimm once said: "Popular poetry lives still in the state of innocence; she is naked, without ornament, bearing in herself the image of God. Art has arrived at consciousness; she has no longer the courage to represent things as they are; she must dress them up." This was a firm conviction of Frau Talvj, which remained with her even to her death, for as late as 1869 she wrote for a German magazine a short article entitled "Die Lieder der Kosacken".

As mentioned before up to the time of Heckerwelder the





American Indian had been considered little better than an animal. Because Heckerwelder saw the human in the red man and had implied that the Indian was more acute, more politic, and, in some respects, more refined than had been generally understood, he had been severely criticised. Frau Talvj followed soon after with the same belief in the humanity of the Indian. With the same keen scientific interest peculiar to her in other works of research she set to work to unearth the sources of Indian culture in the language and poetry of that nation. A brief resume of the results of her research along this line will show us clearly the superior character of her work.

Not only because of physical resemblances but also because of logical geographical changes and developments, it is natural to believe that the first civilization in America emanated from the north-eastern part of Asia. The Indian's features bore such resemblances to both the Mongolian and Malayan races that a relationship must have existed at one time. While in Europe the great migrations took place from east to west, in America they took place from north to south. When the Asiatic people crossed the western continent in the sixth and seventh centuries, they did not find it empty and uninhabited. It is very probable that, in a measure, the Asiatic peoples mixed with the inhabitants, and in a measure some of the tribes remained intact and unmixed. The slight but nevertheless undeniable differences among the American branches of Indians show that the Mongolian and Malayan races were related to some extent. We know that heretofore every historical hypothesis has been destroyed by the heterogeneous nature of the languages whose wonderful structure seems almost to remove completely the American Indian from any rela-



tionship with the old world. The language of the Indian is a sort of secret veil which has not yet been lifted. It must be admitted that of all uncivilized peoples the American Indian in his original condition stands distinctive in poetic form. The African races are either rough barbarians or harmless beings unable to pass beyond the boundaries of an intellectual childhood. The uncivilized peoples of Asia, on the other hand, are enslaved by despotism; while the mountain dwellers and Nomads, who alone are free, bear a certain resemblance to the belligerent Indians modified, to be sure, by various local conditions. The nationality of the Indian seems to harmonize with his surroundings more than in the case of other uncivilized peoples. His misdeeds seem more the natural results of a spiritual condition not yet developed, than evidence of innate wickedness. His religion is the religion of nature, he is a pantheist.

The Indian whether he sees his bitterest enemy or his best friend wears the same passive countenance. Among the Iroquois as well as the Aurocaners the same immovable pride is found, which is the source of all their virtues as well as their misdeeds. It is this pride which gives them the silent, gloomy, scornful aspect which changes slightly as suspicion and fear disappear. This same pride gives them their moral unyieldingness and stubborn persistence in manner and customs, as well as their almost unnatural fortitude in bearing pain, and their peculiarly unbending sense of justice. The main fault of the Indian is usually considered his ungovernable desire for revenge. But the motive which prompts revenge in the Indian is not the same motive which prompts the murderer to lurk in





in the darkness for a chance to strike the deadly blow. The two underlying principles of the whole existence of the Indian, honor and justice, leave no room to doubt the possibility of moral development.

The Indian divides all objects on the basis of animate and inanimate. Every animal has a soul and a claim to immortality. Nature is the object of their reverence. However, when they ascribe superhuman powers to stones, plants, fire, and so forth, it is not materialism, for of all these objects the lower spirits are living souls. Many of their superstitious sayings, which are handed down secretly from father to son, are without doubt as childish and absurd as the sayings of other uncivilized peoples; but many among them have a wonderful depth and meaning. The Indian views the living world as a great body whose members are all subject to the same laws of birth, growth, endurance, and release. The earth is to him a common mother, who bears in her love the seed of all life and from whence everything which exists receives its first form. Thus was it decreed by the great and good spirit, the father of men and of animals and of plants. The regions below the earth are still peopled with many lower races. The Delaware Indians will not eat a rabbit or a mole, for some soul might be contained therein retarded in its development. They could not tell whether or not it was related to them. Their ancestors called the rattle-snake grandfather and would not kill it for any price, nor even allow the white men to do it. This idea of their relationship to animals is shown in their tribe names, Wolf, Bear, Tortoise, Eagle Indians. The superstitious fear of the owl among some of the tribes and the beliefs in the signifi-



cance of the song and the flight of certain birds come, no doubt, from the same source. Similar bonds connect the whole living world for them. Among many tribes even the stars are considered members of a family. Thus we see the Indian's religion is highly poetic. Another poetic feature in the Indian is the tendency to have specific names instead of general. Poetry loses itself in the general and vague description. The more specific the more individual the expressions, the more graphic and clear the picture. We see from these conditions then a treasure of poetic material lying in the inmost nature of the Indian. The questions naturally arise then, "Why did the Indian produce so little in poetry and why is what he has produced in the way of songs and short stories so meager and uninteresting?" To these questions the answer may be given that as with individuals so with nations, not every poetic temperament is therefore a poet. The Abby Clavigero gives a most brilliant picture of the poetry of the old Mexicans. Their language, he tells us, was bright, pure, and pleasing, full of pictures and attractive objects in nature such as flowers, trees, rivers, and so forth. But he takes the bright glow of this picture out of his imagination, for he offers no proofs and even adds that, among the remnants which we have of their poetry, there are some verses in which important insertions have been made in order to produce the necessary rhythm. He adds naively that this custom was probably only the fault of their poor poets. Abby Molina describes the poetry of the Araucan Indians in similarly glowing terms. But such descriptions are based on what the poetry of these tribes theoretically should be, not what it really is.





The Indians are a people in which the passions are stronger than the imagination. Intense passions are never productive of poetry. The great effect of these passions on the Indians is to rob them almost of their human nature, and to give them the aspect of fiends when filled with the desire for revenge. As to their skill in the use of metaphors, it is rather the outgrowth of their method of living, than an outgrowth of the imagination. Their metaphors are taken immediately out of nature, in which they have more confidence than in the realm of the abstract -- the realm from which so many educated people obtain their metaphorical expressions. The metaphors of the Indian are exceedingly simple. Their innumerable traditions do not show many traces of imagination. It is a noticeable fact that in America partial civilization was found among the mountains while the inhabitants of the plains lived in unbounded freedom. Down through the centuries it has been harder to civilize the Indians of the plains, than the Indians of the mountains. The monotony of the plains however fresh and beautiful they may extend before the eye, does not nourish the god-given gifts of man. The mountain and valley, on the other hand, lull the inhabitant into harmony with his surroundings as in a cradle, soothed by the music of the wild mountain streams.

The love for the lonely possessed by the Indian seems to spring from his love of independence. Only when he has cast off all bonds of companionship does he consider himself absolutely free. William von Humboldt tells of a tribe in South America which possesses this trait to such an extent that even the children at times



leave their parents for four or five days, and wander about in the forests sustaining themselves by herbs and roots of trees. So deeply ingrained in their souls is the love for lonely independence.

Further, the Indians are by nature reserved and not at all prone to disclose their emotions, a fact which works against the production of lyric poetry. The Indians among themselves are not a gloomy secretive people as they appear to the white man. Before others the Indian seems to be completely absorbed in himself and given up to melancholy. This is simply because he scorns to evince any curiosity. All who have had the opportunity to observe Indians when among their own people and when not disturbed by suspicious fears describe them as extraordinarily talkative and cheerful, and full of a certain dry satirical wit, especially at the expense of the white man. But it is doubtful if their talk was ever of a very sensible nature. Love does not belong among the passions of the Indian. This does not signify that he is incapable of the tenderer emotions, but only that they are relative and not primary. The women among the Indians are as much respected as among other uncivilized peoples. They regard them with a sort of indifferent attitude. Jealousy is an emotion not known to the Indian, and is regarded by him when seen in the white man as worthy of ridicule. Therefore we cannot expect to find a very deep feeling expressed in their love songs which frequently accompany their dances. The musical element is lacking almost entirely in their songs. Even the heartiest advocates of the Indian admit this lack.

Their poetry is limited to their conversation. Alexander





von Humboldt says in speaking of the Caraibens, "Sie sprechen mit grosser Wortgelaufigkeit, mit lauter Stimme, mit sehr markirtem Ausdruck, allein fast ganz ohne Aktion. Ihre Gesichtszüge bleiben regungslos, doch ihr Blick ist befehlend und streng." Their language unaided by gesture or facial expression must necessarily, therefore, find its force in the eloquence of the words themselves. Their life is such that we do not find their conversations like productions produced by the overpowering emotion of an individual whose breast is overflowing. Rather their language serves as the means of attaining that to which their ambition drives them, influence, honor, praise.

Quite different from the custom of other nations, the dance in the case of the Indians is not merely a favorite pastime but it is rather a language of their inmost souls. The dance is to them what song is to other nations. The perfect abandon of the Indian war-dance, the sacrifice-dance, the peace-dance, in fullest measure expresses their feelings. As accompaniment they sing single isolated words which the expressive movements of the dance make entirely intelligible. We never hear of a love dance among the Indians; whereas among other nations the manifold variations of jealousy, greed, fickleness, and reserve form the most important situations and settings for pantomime dances.

The language of the Algonquines is spread over a very large part of north-western America. This language seems to be very well understood by all of the Indians of this region. Their language is rich and possesses all of the characteristics one could wish for in a conversation. From the lips of the women it seems to be a series of vowel sounds interrupted only here and there by



a necessary consonant. These are breathed forth with a softness and melody which are not unlike the deeper tones of birds. In the mouths of the men they have the sounds corresponding to the dashing mountain streams which gradually reach the plains below and flow uniformly and gently. Nature's voices to the feelings and emotions are taken up and made a part of the Indians' speech. The same writer who describes the language of the Algonquins says that the Indians have no idea of poetry, in as much as they borrow the character of rhyme and meter. Their songs are short bursts of enthusiasm which are bound by no laws of composition, and are sung in a monotonous fashion slowly or quickly as it appeals to the singer. Their parables are numerous and sharp, full of activity and always conveying a favorite teaching. Their stories are always intended to carry a moral. It is impossible, he says, to get the Indian to repeat word for word or sentence for sentence songs or stories which his rash imagination formulates and colors in almost winged fashion. If he attempts to do it, the glowing picture fades. Any translation of the Indian language is unsatisfactory and colorless.

These observations apply to all of the Indian tribes of the western continent. The Greenlanders and Eskimaux, although of apparently different origin, speak a language of almost the same construction and character. Their social gatherings are always accompanied by song and dance. The sea-dog hunt is a favorite theme of theirs. Their songs like those of the Indians have neither rhyme nor meter; they consist of short irregular sentences which are recited with a sort of rhythmic intonation. A verse or sentence is sung by a single voice, accompanied by a sort of drum. All join in





on the chorus while one or two voices shout, above, a few jubilant tones, entirely without connection.

Their song battles, *Gesangeskämpfe*, have a peculiarly national character. If a Greenlander has been insulted, he makes no demonstration of wrath or vengeance; but he composes a satirical poem which, accompanied by song and dance, he recites to members of his family, usually the women, until they know it by heart. Then he invites his opponent to a satirical duel. The latter appears and both enter the limits set. The insulted one begins his satire, dancing to the accompaniment of a drum, and encouraged by the hearty support of his friends on the chorus which comes after every sentence. He holds his opponent up to ridicule until he becomes the laughing stock of all the listeners. The opponent enters into the duel of satire and this giving and taking continues until one or the other is exhausted. He who succeeds in getting the last word has won the contest and likewise a great respect. Truths may be spoken in these duels but nothing rough or passionate. The people gathered around judge the contest and thereafter the contestants are the best of friends.

The funeral dirges of the Greenlanders are very similar to those of the Indians, especially the Sioux Indians. A truly poetic emotion is evidenced as the mourners and friends in tones of woe and sorrow chant or sing the songs of grief interrupted, as it were, after each sentence by a loud cry of grief from all present. Carver who travelled in North America and later wrote a book about his experiences describes the funeral songs of the Sioux as being very similar. Schiller in his "*Nodowessische Todtenklage*" has



used one of the "Leichenreden" of the Indians as being a work of very great beauty. Charlevoix, who wrote a book about the Iroquois Indians, gives the general characteristics of their songs as wild and painful. Their tones, he says, are monotonous and iron like. He describes a scene which I shall translate here word for word. "First", he says, "they all seat themselves upon the ground like monkeys, without any order whatsoever. From time to time a man arises and comes forward slowly into the middle of the space, always in their way keeping time. He turns his head from one side to another, sings a song, which is far from being melodious, and speaks some words which do not have much meaning. Often it is a war song, often a funeral dirge, often a song of attack or conquest; for in as much as these people drink nothing but water, they have no drinking songs, and up to the present it has not occurred to them to sing of their love episodes." In describing the terrible character of their war-song, Charlevoix goes on to say, "They sing it with a loud voice, one after the other, for each man has his own which no one else is allowed to sing. There are some songs which belong to the whole family." The terror of these war songs must be in the method of singing them for the words themselves do not strike terror to the reader. The following is an example of the mildness of the words which, however, when sung produce terror and consternation. It is a war song of one of the Iroquois tribes:

"Nun geh' ich, nun geh' ich zum freud'gen Geschäfte  
 O grosser Geist, erbarme Dich mein,  
 Im freud'gen Geschäfte hab' Erbarmen mit mir!"





Auf meinem Wege gieb gutes Glück,  
 Und habe Erbarmen, o grosser Geist,  
 Mit meinem freud'gen Geschäfte!

Nun geh' ich, nun geh' ich zum freud'gen Geschäfte!  
 O gieb mir Sieg und Gelingen,  
 O grosser Geist, und erbarme Dich mein!"

An example of a death complaint of an Indian mother at the grave of her little child will show the general trend of such songs.

"O hätt'st du gelebt, mein Sohn, gelebt,  
 Bald hätte und wie! deine junge Hand  
 Den mächtigen Bogen spannen gelernt!

Verderben, mein Sohn, o hätt'st du gelebt,  
 Verderben hätten bald deine Pfeil'  
 Den Feinden uns'res Stammes gebracht!

Du hätt'st getrunken ihr Blut, ihr Blut,  
 Und hättest verzehret ihr Fleisch, ihr Fleisch,  
 Und Sklaven in Menge hätt'st du gemacht!"

u. s. w.

As said before the Indian love songs are rare. Frau Talvj succeeded in getting a few from Dr. Julius who in turn had obtained the originals as well as the English translations from two half-breed



Indian women, in his travels through western United States. They are exceedingly interesting because of their simplicity and naiveté. They are as follows:

"Zwei Tag ist's nun, zwei Tage  
Dass letzt ich Nahrung nommen  
Zwei Tage nun, zwei Tage!

Für dich, für dich, mein Lieb,  
Für dich ist's dass ich traure,  
Für dich, für dich, mein Lieb.

Die Flut ist tief und breit,  
Auf der mein Lieb gesegelt,  
Die Flut ist tief und breit!

Für dich ist's dass ich traure,  
Für dich, für dich, mein Lieb!  
Für dich ist's dass ich traure!"

and,

"Wahrhaftig, ihn lieb ich allein,  
Dess Herz ist wie der süsse Saft,  
Der süsse Saft des Ahornsbaumes!  
Wahrhaftig ihn lieb ich allein!

Ihn lieb ich, ihn lieb ich, dessen Herz  
Verwandt ist dem Laube, dem Espenlaub,





Dem Blatt das immer lebt und bebt,  
Wahrhaftig ihn lieb ich allein!"

A little song which Herder translated shows the poetic nature of a superstition which the South American Indians have. The Peru Indians believe that a goddess dwells in the clouds with a water-pitcher in her hand, who is ordered to produce rain at the proper times. If she is slow her brother dashes the pitcher to pieces with thunder and lightning. It is as follows:

"Schöne Göttin  
Sieh' dein Bruder  
Deine Urne  
Nun zerschlägt!  
Mit dem Blitze  
Donnert, schmettert,  
Wetterstrahlet.  
Du, o Göttin,  
Giebst uns Regen  
Und dazwischen  
Hagel giebst du  
Schnee auch giebst du!  
Weltenschöpfer  
Weltensee  
Vinacocha  
Hat dies Amt dir  
Übergeben  
Zu verwalten!"



A learned German traveller says of the Indians of Brazil, "Das ganze Urgeschlecht von Amerika bietet eine Masse von gänzlicher Geistesarmut und von Seelenstarrsucht." This harsh judgment is not fair nor just for most of the Indian tribes with which civilized peoples have come in contact have been the warlike tribes whose souls have been deadened to all poetic feeling by their uneven struggle for existence against the white man. We have not judged the Indian under original or even normal conditions. Whatever the general opinion, it must be admitted after an unbiased study of the Indian that even if he himself is not a poet, he is, at any rate, a most poetic study for poets of other nations.

Frau Talvj's humane attitude toward the Indian can be traced through her history of New England, as will be shown later. It was a bold stroke on her part to take such a decided stand in regard to the Indian, one for which Heckerwelder had been criticised and condemned. But she dared to make it because she felt the justice and truth of it. Here again this seeking for the truth as manifested among those of the Goethe circle shows itself.

By this study and others Frau Talvj was laying the foundation for a kind of history which America even up to the present day lacks, namely, a "Kultur" or "Sittengeschichte". We possess political histories, industrial, and economic, but no history, as such, traces the inner development of the people; no history shows us how from a state of savagery we have attained to culture and high moral standards. Such history is yet to be written and whenever it is written, the name of Frau Talvj will appear as one of the first to have contributed to it.





## Chapter III.

## Novels.

In Frau Talvj's early novels we see the influence of the fearful distress caused by the Napoleonic Wars. A product of Germany's finer culture, she passed through not only the heroic period of German history, but also through its classical period. As one reads her novels, especially her early novels, the impression grows of her almost unlimited interest in humanity. The theme of many of her early novels, as for instance "Die Rache", "Verfehlte Bestimmung", "Das vergebliche Opfer", and "Der Lauf der Welt", is based on the heart<sup>rending</sup> results of an unfaithful and unsteady love. With a power almost unnatural for one who did not pass through such experience, she pictures mental confusion, distress, and despair of her heroines or heroes, as the case may be, in such a realistic manner, that we are moved at her will with hatred or pity. The result to the reader, at times, is the feeling of a desire to flee from the conditions portrayed because they seem so real. This, it seems to me, is evidence of power as a narrator. Fascination which holds one spell bound to a book does not always, nor even generally, grow out of the realism of the conditions portrayed, but rather out of a somewhat fantastic element which has crept in. Her novels can hardly be called stories of entertainment. They deal with great psychological problems of her time and of all time. The materialism of this world will never become so great that we shall be blind to the supremacy of that indefinable something which we call inner calm or harmony; nor will we ever be blind to the fact that without it life's wheels





do not fit into each other without friction, and that without it life's pendulum fails to swing in even arcs.

The names of the characters in Frau Talvj's books will be forgotten as will also the characters, but the harmony or discord struck by them on life's harp will continue to sound forth either as an example or as a warning. The tragedy of life, as Frau Talvj shows us, lies not within the realm of what is tangible but rather within the realm of the spirit. Jealousy, that venomous enemy of persons and nations alike, plays its part in her novels. Sometimes jealousy prevails and again it is ground down and crushed under the heel of reason and sanity. In her work, "Das Vergebliche Opfer", it is crushed only at the expense of a pure noble life. The theme of this is odd enough to justify especial treatment. The main characters are Hilbert and Victor, loyal friends with the balance of loyalty in favor of Victor, and Meta. Victor out of friendship marries Meta in order to give her the protection of his name until his life long friend Hilbert, a young doctor, shall be in a position to marry her. The arrangement is that she shall then be granted a divorce by Victor and the marriage with Hilbert be performed. Hilbert is not playing fair with Meta in as much as he is pretending to pay court to the daughter of a very prominent physician who, he thinks, can use his influence in helping him climb the ladder of fame. Meta who is about to be forced into a distasteful marriage by her grandparents and guardians accepts Victor's offer on behalf of his friend. She truly loves Hilbert and enters into this temporary marriage plan in all sincerity. Hilbert, intensely jealous by nature, exacts a pledge from Victor that the relation of husband and wife shall never





enter into his life with Meta, but that the full protection of husband for wife shall exist. Contrary to human nature, it would seem, Victor maintains completely the relation of mere friend. Even when he discovers that Meta in realizing Hilberts shallowness has unconsciously grown to hate the latter and love him, he remains true to his freind and goes away on a visit in order to give Hilbert, who is now ready to marry her, a chance to win her back. But Hilbert can not succeed in winning her back. With failure comes bitterness which in turn makes him turn on his more than friend and accuse him of base unfaithfulness to his pledge. No act is too mean and small for him to perpetrate. In order to save himself he resorts to blackmail, but to no avail; justice prevails and Victor burning with a deep and abiding love for his friend-wife feels himself free to go to her and declare his love. He comes too late for death has already set its seal upon her. After a very short period of supreme and complete happiness in the assurance of his love she is taken from him.

In Voctor we find a noble and extaordinary character. Placed under conditions which seem almost irresistible he remains true to his friend. At times we feel it is almost a false sense of duty and loyalty which impels him. Meta, the symbol of purity, is drawn into conditions and temptations she little dreams of. It is refreshing to find a character ideal enough to withstand such temptations, yet real enough to appeal to the reader. In Hilbert we meet the kind of man whom we are not surprised at meeting. His type is everywhere about us and it is his type which gives us the satisfaction of having truly lived when we have withstood it. There is a modern touch in this story, perhaps because human nature is everywhere the same. It is not a plausible story in many respects,





but withal it carries with it a tone of stern reality. Hilberts we have about us, who in their blind ambitious struggle for fame and power resort to unfair and unreasonable means of attainment, little considering the suffering brought about by such means. Hilbert is selfishness, Victor altruism and Meta<sup>the</sup> victim of life's tragedy.

Her novel, "Die Rache" has as its theme the distress and suffering brought about by the irony of fate; but it does not make the appeal nor the impression that "Das Vergebliche Opfer" does. The characters are military and much of the conventional and seemingly artificial envelopes the whole. The realism of this is not so great, in as much as it does not deal with the everyday circumstances of life. I am reminded of the modern society novels, only that Frau Talvj keeps her women surrounded with an atmosphere of purity and reserve, a circumstance which is so often lacking in present day novels. In this novel we find a strange element again in the requirement left in regard to an inheritance. The young woman about whom fate weaves an impenetrable net of unfortunate circumstances is to come into possession of an inheritance on the condition that, in order that the family name may not die, she shall marry during her twenty-fifth year a man who will yield his name and take hers. This condition in itself makes us anticipate meeting men characters not altogether admirable. The result of such a condition is what we might expect, a loveless marriage.

In "Verfehlte Bestimmung" we have a story whose end also is a loveless marriage. From the outcome of so many of Frau Talvj's stories we might be led to suspect that her own marriage was not happy. But we know positively that she was queen of her husband's home and heart. Her keen sense of sympathy, her unusual power of





spiritual penetration must account for the trend of her stories. We see also in her stories a thorough understanding of Germany's condition. It is interesting to read into her novels not characters as such but characters symbolic of the German nation. To her Germany was real enough to be represented by a human character. Her love for her country was great enough to make its mistakes and trials appeal to her as would those of a beloved friend or relative.

In 1852 four works appeared: "Heloise", "Die Auswanderer", "Maria Barcoczy", an historical novel, and <sup>"Kurmark und</sup> "Kaukasus". At this juncture the first two only, could be procured. "Heloise", which appeared in English at first and later in German, merits attention for two reasons. First it shows a very accurate and thorough study of Russia and Russian conditions. Much of the story is laid in Russia and as we read we have a feeling that the author is not drawing too strongly on her imagination. Somehow we feel even in the foreign atmosphere a sense of faith and belief in an adherence to conditions as they really are. This knowledge of Russian life and Russian geography was gained during her stay in Russia. When we recall that this stay extended between her ninth and sixteenth years, we realize with renewed force the keen perceptive and strong retentive and developing powers of the woman. A second reason why this work merits our attention is that in it she expresses the very characteristics which made the circle of Weimar women almost without an equal in the world. A quotation made from "Heloise" in the first chapter illustrates these characteristics.

The place of action in this story changes rapidly and completely, but the suddenness is not shocking, perhaps because of an unconscious faith in the verity of conditions portrayed. In this





novel as well as in her other novels she is subjectively real as well as objectively. She shows the influence of Goethe and Schiller in the attempt to be natural and real rather than beautiful. The political entanglements through which Russia had passed and many of which were within her own experience, are given vividness and interest. The noble woman, die edle Frau, and her mission and importance stand out by virtue of description as such as well as by virtue of contrast with the empty and shallow sort.

We come now to the novel which is of greatest interest to us because it deals with America and Americans. A few sentences from Talvj's own Vorwort to "Die Auswanderer" will serve as the best introduction to a discussion of it. She says, "Nicht ein Bild von America beabsichtige ich dem Leser hier aufzurollen, sondern nur Bilder aus Amerika, wie sie meiner vieljährigen Erfahrung erschienen. Wenn ich dem Leser nach und nach das Weltkind und die Gottesfürchtige, den Cavalier und den Farmer, die sociale Philantropin und Pharisäerin und andere echt national Charaktere vorführe; wenn ich in einzelnen Zügen die gesellschaftlichen Verhältnisse der verschiedenen Lebensalter und Geschlechter, und die Einwirkungen des Methodismus des Osten auf die religiöse Geistesöde des Westens schildere -- so bin ich weit entfernt damit andeuten zu wollen, dass diese Charaktere und Verhältnisse die ausschliesslichen Typen der Gesellschaft seien, wie sie sich in den Nordamerikanischen Freistaaten gebildet hat. Die Bilder die ich dem Leser vorführe sind sicherlich wahr; aber er möge nicht vergessen dass viele andere ebenso wahre Bilder, die dasselbe Recht hätten sich zu zeigen, wie jene, ungezeigt blieben. Namentlich habe ich die Politik absichtlich ganz aus dem Spiele gelassen und sie nur berührt, wo es unvermeidlich war."





Her characters, we must believe, are real characters, but are not, as she herself tells us, definite persons. "Individuelle Wahrheit ist nicht immer persönliche Wahrheit. In Auffassung und Darstellung dieser Charaktere und Scenen, insofern sie ein nationales Gepräge haben, wird das Auge und die Hand der Europäerin kaum zu verkennen sein; aber nur eine einseitige Nationaleitelkeit, nur eine beschränkte Volkseigenliebe kann verhindern, auch das Herz in ihnen zu erkennen, das für das freie Vaterland des Theuersten was es auf Erden besitzt, und die freiwillig adoptirte Heimat schlägt." This novel throughout gives evidence of Frau Talvj's keen perceptive powers. Always wide awake to political conditions she, nevertheless, chose to embody in a work which should be read by her native countrymen as well as her adopted countrymen not a development of political or industrial conditions, but rather of conditions which go deeper into the hearts and lives of us all, namely subtle social conditions. And even in this it does not seem at all apparent that she wished to give any lessons as such. As she herself says, she has given pictures. But who of us can study pictures without being affected by them? Whether the effect be pleasing or disagreeable depends largely on the skill of the artist in blending color and action. Continuing the picture simile I may say, there is no flashiness of color in her pictures. A calm and quietness of tone surround them all. To be sure this calm is at times freighted with the most intense suffering both mental and physical. Perhaps in order to make whatever references may be made clearer and more intelligible a brief outline of the story will be an aid.

Der Landrath von Sassen had been the guardian of Klothilde Osten, a beautiful young girl whose father had died three years be-





fore. A heavy secret which she seemed unable to entrust to her guardian and friend was oppressing her. When she became of age she had preferred to have the Landrath continue his supervision of her property. Now she asked for her money without being able to disclose the reason. She did tell him, however, that she was planning to go to America with a Dr. Stellmann and family, giving as her reason "Europamüde". The Landrath was both angry and grieved over this and cried out, "Wäre es möglich! auch Sie angesteckt von dem vergiftenden Fieber der Zeit! Auch Ihr Herz, Klothilde, das mir stets der Sitz der edelsten bescheidensten deutschen Weiblichkeit war, auch Ihr klarer gebildeter Geist durchdrungen von dem unseligen Emancipations)Wahnsinn unserer Tage?..... Wissen Sie nicht dass die Würde des Weibes, dass die Sitte einzig und allein in der Civilisation wurzelt?" Klothilde realized the injustice she was doing herself and her friend by her secret plans and so disclosed to him the fact that she was engaged. Hubert, the man to whom she was engaged was at that time about to be freed from an exile and imprisonment which he had been forced to undergo for political reasons. He had been a favorite pupil of her fathers, and it was at this time that the young people had been brought into relations which developed into an engagement after an intense courtship accompanied often by pangs of jealousy on his part and pity on hers. Their inner life did not strike in perfect accord and harmony but she consoled herself with the thought, "Die Liebe welche die Essenz seines ganzen Wesens ist, wird alle Irrthümer seines Geistes ausgleichen. Die Liebe wird ihn Gott in der Wahrheit erkennen lehren, die Liebe, die höher ist denn alle Vernunft." With





him, therefore, she would go to America and start life anew having severed all ties that bound them to the homeland. In the haste that attended their departure the marriage vows remained unspoken. They were to be married immediately upon their arrival or on the boat if possible. A terrible storm wrecked the boat and separated the lovers. Klotilde was rescued and carried to the coast of Florida in a shattered physical and mental state. Upon her recovery at the hospitable home of a planter she gradually made herself take an interest in the things about her. In vain both she and her benefactor, through the newspapers and through inquiry sought for knowledge of Hubert. The house in New York into whose hands the funds had been put could not be communicated with, nor could she get any word from her former guardian. Reduced to a penniless condition and unwilling to place herself under any deeper obligations to this Florida planter, she announced her desire to find employment as a teacher of French, German, music, and art. Fortunately Alonzo, her benefactor, had an uncle and two cousins in Charleston, who were able to give Klotilde such employment. Alonzo was engaged to the younger and more beautiful of his cousins. She, however, through an infatuation for a stranger whom she had met the previous summer had an insane desire to learn German, the mother tongue of the object of her infatuation. Klotilde entered the family of Castleton's as a tutor and companion.

The two sisters were the extremes of each other, and it was in Klotilde's relations with the two that the author's subtlety was evidenced. Miss Sarah Castleton was a type of person whose every thought, word, and deed were governed by a religious fear and ardor which made life miserable not only for the individual, but for all





around. Her weeks were routines of unchangeable tasks, of which Church duties formed a large part. Hers was a Christian life without being a religious life. Cold, hard, and inelastic practicality was her guiding star. Her very appearance gave this impression. Her sister Virginia, on the other hand, had her character well described by the term which the author applied to her, namely "dashing". Sarah described her well when she said to Klotilde, "Virginie ist gut aber sie ist von dieser Welt! Wie sagt doch der Apostel?" She also unconsciously described herself. In such an atmosphere Klotilde, the product of Germany's highest culture and refinement, took up her work. Time passed and as Virginia became better acquainted with Klotilde she confided in her. She disclosed to her her love for this strange dreamer whom she had met the year before and who seemed to return her love. Meantime the abolition movement had been growing in intensity, and this dreamer, whom we shall call Bergdorf, suddenly appeared in Charleston as an advocate of the movement. Such ideas were altogether contrary to those held by Virginia's father and so she knew that she could never gain his consent to a marriage with Bergdorf. In fact his very presence in the town threatened his freedom. Virginia saw him secretly and planned to elope with him. In order to further arrangements she succeeded in persuading Klotilde to carry a message to him for her. Bergdorf was none other than Hubert the long lost lover of Klotilde. The reunion resulted in their leaving together instead of Virginia and Bergdorf.

The second volume of this interesting work is taken up largely with the trials and difficulties of getting into a home of their own. Klotilde and Hubert have many, many things to tell each





other and it is in these conversations that the author so skillfully works in her German ideals. At last the two are settled at Woodhill in a beautiful New England village. On the very eve of the crowning feature of this happy home, motherhood, Hubert is ruthlessly taken from her by a duel which is the outgrowth of a jealousy caused by his former relations with Virginia. The author here gives us very vivid pictures of southern pride and impulsiveness, the cavalier. The young mother cannot withstand the shock of a second parting and so peacefully and with a smile on her lips she joins her beloved in the last long sleep of kindred souls which knows neither awakening nor parting.

The arrangement of the story is such as to make it almost impossible to weave in minor themes. Many details are worked in which seem unrelated to the main theme until the whole is read and thought over. It is not a wildy exciting story in as much as neither time nor action is very rapid. It is not the kind to hold one spell bound until read from cover to cover. Neither is it at all wearisome or slow in movement. There are some books which resemble people in this respect. Think of two persons, one all dash and sputter; the other just as alive but calm and controlled whether the environment be exciting to the highest degree, or intense with grief and suffering. We feel we know the first after one meeting, we may not be as attracted to the second after one meeting, but an irresistible something makes us seek that second again and again. Unconsciously in the intervals we think of that person, we become conscious of a quiet charm of personality which gradually makes us want that person's friendship. So it is with books. "Die Auswanderer", or "Woodhill", as it was called later by a translator,





possesses an indefinable something which makes us take it up again after having laid it aside. The feeling is present always that the full import of the story or of the pictures, as the author says, is not contained in the mere words. However, I do not mean to imply here that a deep psychological or philosophical meaning underlies the words; rather, that by a subtleness of touch the author has inserted the results of her observations in America. As shall be indicated later we get by a description here, a judgment there, or a casual remark, the prevailing idea of Germans held by the Americans; the prevailing idea of Americans held by the Germans; the condition of national literature and art including church music; American adherence to custom; American idea of courtesy and education. The author also touches upon the Transcendental movement, the temperance movement, the woman emancipation movement and the abolition movement. In short she weaves into a pleasing story as such, the observations and judgments of a keen minded, intelligent woman whose opinion is that of an impartial critic. The motivation, if a work of this sort can be spoken of as having motivation is not intricate or involved. It has the peculiar charm of William Dean Howell's works. A criticism of him seems to apply to Frau Talvj, especially in this work." In reading his books we are perpetually reminded that we are reading the writing of a highly cultivated author. His pictures are not mere stiff, hard, accurate photographs; they are photographs with feeling in them and sentiment. There is a charm in his original style which is as vivid as it is flexible. One feels that he has a gift of cunning observation and a distinguished way of expressing his impressions. .... There is no ruggedness nor





clumsiness, but instead his style is simple and unstudied, clear and understandable." This latter statement is especially applicable to Frau Talvj's description of the various occupants whom Klotilde meets in the stage coach as she and Hubert are journeying toward their new home. Frau Talvj does not strive so much for outward beauty as she does to uphold German ideals.

Many of these ideals are brought out by Klotilde's life in the family of the Castleton's. Sarah is a type of Christian to whom religion is the performance of certain tasks through an unyielding sense of duty. This, however, does not mean that she did not derive inner peace and help from these duties. On the contrary the more severe and colorless the duty the greater the apparent satisfaction. She felt it her duty to read the Bible through from cover to cover and so during morning and evening reading she did not allow herself to indulge in the reading of any favorite passage unless it came along in the regular routine. With a calmness approaching coldness she saw only the fulfillment of a mission in her mother's death. In answer to Klotilde's question, "Haben sie Ihre Mutter ~~mutter~~ sehr jung verloren?" she says, "Meine Mutter verliess uns als ich kaum zwölf Jahre alt war.....Aber wäre es nicht unrecht zu klagen, da sie Gewinnerin ist, während nur wir die Verlierenden sind? Sie hatte Ihre Mission erfüllt. Ja sie war in der Gnade!" Another instance of Sarah's sense of duty is seen in her answer to Klotilde's question, "Warum gehen Sie nicht hinunter zu den Damen?" She answers, "Ich bin nicht mit ihnen bekannt.. Ich gehe mit wenig anderen Personen um, als die zu unserer Kirche gehören..... Es gibt gewiss in jeder christlichen Kirche viele gute, würdige Menschen....theils





find ich auch, dass die Gespräche des gewöhnlichen Weltlebens unser Gemüt gar zu sehr zerstreuen um uns mit Sicherheit in dieses Gewirr hineinwagen zu können." How different an atmosphere is here represented from that of the Goethe circle! And yet, how truly the atmosphere of the times here in America! In Klotilde's influence in the family, we find the same modesty and subtlety which we find in Frau Talvj's own. By virtue of Klotilde's circumstances and position we could not be pleased with any other attitude than that of modesty even with the certain knowledge of her superiority.

Klotilde had obtained permission from the family to absent herself when company was present, and so, very often, she spent her evenings in her room alone and in tears. Sarah found her in tears often and in her way tried to sympathize with her; but her narrow sense of duty had chilled even her human sympathy. In their conversations together in these quiet moments we find many fundamental German ideals expressed by Klotilde. Sarah, upon one occasion, intimated that it was wrong to wish for anything to have happened differently from what it did. Klotilde answered "So dürften wir nichts wünschen? So wären uns unsere Gefühle der Liebe, der Sehnsucht, des Verlangens umsonst gegeben." Take the feeling of love, longing, and desire from this life and it would become empty and colorless. God works through the human feelings to bring about his will. The old idea of man being God's slave is no longer held to. The German probably more than any other nation feels the partnership, the God in man. The German element of the past did much toward keeping true religion alive. Sarah is the type of person for whom religion is made up of two parts, Christianity and life with the chief element of her Christianity fear. Klotilde is a type for whom religion is





an indivisible unity. Religion is life. She is in no way, however, unorthodox for she has brought herself to pray honestly "Herr, dein Wille geschehe!" But with all faith and belief in this she still believes that from God came the power to love and suffer. Not because Jesus wept is it allowed to mortals to weep, but because he himself was human and suffered through this humanity even unto tears. It cannot be wrong to weep, for such is human nature and God's will is not to stifle nature but to give man power over himself. Klotilde's answer to Sarah's remark, "Es ist erlaubt zu weinen denn auch Jesus weinte" expresses the depth to which true religion has penetrated into German life. "Nein, Sarah, nicht darum! Bedürfen Sie für jede menschliche Regung, für die Befriedigung jeder menschlichen Neigung eines Gebotes, eines Gesetzes, einer biblischen Autorität? Sie sagen, wir sollen Nichts wünschen was Gottes Wille nicht ist. Wohl! Wenn aber das geschehe, was wir wünschen, nun dann wäre es Gottes Wille, weil ohne seinen Willen nichts geschehen kann." Again the German idea of religion is brought out by suggested contrast with the American idea. Hubert says in a conversation with Klotilde after their reunion, "Der Amerikaner, wenn er nicht entschieden ein Philosoph ist, kennt kein anderes religiöses Leben als ein auf eine Offenbarung, sei es nun eine wahre oder wahr geglaubte, gegründetes. Er ist in gewissem Sinne bewundernswürdig duldsam. Er interressirt sich für die Juden; er wird dem Mohamedaner eine Art von wahrer Frömmigkeit zugestehen. Er übt Toleranz gegen eine Unzahl von christlichen protestantischen Secten ja sogar gegen die Katholiken zwingt er sich Duldung ab. Aber dem Deisten, und sei er der wärmste Gottesverehrer, mistraut er. Er ist ihm ein Heide, ein 'Infidel'." This condition of affairs is still largely





true, especially here in the middle west.

In Klotile's conversations with Mrs. Gardiner, an aunt in the Castleton family, the Goethe philosophy runs through all like an invisible thread. In almost the words the Princess of Este might have used she replies to Mrs. Gardiner's question, "Welche Sprache, Miss Osten, meinen Sie wol dass zuerst in der Welt gesprochen worden ist?" She replies, "Ich habe keine Meinung darüber, solche gelehrte Untersuchungen überlassen wir deutsche Frauen gern unsern philologischen Forschern." Not only did American women not leave such investigation to the men but even then, as Frau Talvj observed, the movement toward emancipation and equal suffrage was incipient. Then as now the men resented such emancipation by refusing to woman the usual courtesy and gallantry. How modern is Hubert's response to Klotilde's criticism of an instance of an ungallant action! "Mag sein, wenigstens weiss ich dass ihr Betragen mich meinen Platz ungestört behaupten liess. Die öffentlichen weiblichen Emancipationsversuche, z. B. die unter den Männern Europas mit Widerwillen und Unmut aufgenommen wurden, haben in Amerika nie andere Empfindungen als gut mütigen Spott erregt." The author goes on here to compare the American and European woman. The respect which the American man shows to woman is not gallantry. It is rather an attitude of protection of the stronger for the weaker. The aristocratic dandy treats the most menial servant with the same air of protection as the finest lady of the land. The basic principle of this respect is that this weaker class must be spared everything which is a physical burden, in short all which robs them of the more tender femininity. The traveller stands horrified at the labors of the women in Europe. In the discharge of domestic duties the American women





stand preeminent, with the exception of the German. This condition, alas! can hardly be said to exist at the present time. America has not remained a domestic nation. Conditions of the present, however, are not conducive to such a state of affairs.

The American must now be a source of wonder to the German, as well as he has been in the past, especially in his relations to his fellow men. As Hubert says, "Er besucht seine Freunde nicht leicht, wie der Deutsche, bloss um sich mit Freunden behaglich zu fühlen. Dazu hat er zu viel zu thun. Die vom Geschäft erübrigte Zeit gehört wie billig der Familie." In Frau Talvj's time "Clubs, Ressourcen, Casinos, diese ableiter der edlern häuslichen Geselligkeit sind im Innern des Landes gänzlich unbekannt," and so to her at that time "der Amerikaner als Hausvater war unendlich schätzenswert." A characteristic of the American, no doubt always odd to the German, was and is the manner in which he is limited and governed by convention. "Der Amerikaner unterwirft sich einem gewissen Codex, der ihm genau sagt, wann er im Frack und weisser Weste erscheinen muss, wann er einer Dame den Arm zu bieten hat, wie bald er eine Visite erwidern muss und dergleichen äussliche Dinge mehr." The American idea of education is also a source of wonder to the German. Be it said, however, to the credit of Americans of to-day the youth of the country are getting sound practical educations, not for the purpose of giving them a social polish, but for the purpose of giving them the power to stand on their own feet in the midst of the industrial development of the age. One or two years at a "Young Ladies' Academy" or "Young Ladies' Seminary" is no longer the educational ambition for American girls.

As early as the first half of the nineteenth century





American respect for law was cause for comment. And then as now the lack of respect was due to the kind of men who made the laws. In this condition we can trace the gradual decrease in respect for age. "Die grosse und rührende Pietät der Alten war es, die dem strengen Freiheitssinn der römischen und spartanischen Jugend ein so schönes Gegengewicht hielt. Sie ehrten die Alten, die Erfahrenen; die Gesetze waren ihnen heilig, weil die Väter sie gegeben." Lack of respect for age characterizes the entire land. Not only is this true in political life but in family life. Virginia illustrates well this "Mangel an Pietät". Virginia cared nothing for her father's sanction when she planned to marry Bergdorf. She made a confidant of Klotilde who, as might be expected of a true German, was deeply shocked. The German relation between father and child is not one in which the individuality of the child is lost, but rather one of filial respect which must stand horrified before the American idea of independence in family relations. To Klotile no happiness could come in after years from a union which lacked a father's sanction.

In an interesting manner the German idea of America is brought out as is also the American idea of Germany, that is in regard to the higher culture, such as poetry and art. Speaking of America Hubert says, "Es ist ein grosser Irrtum der Europäer das frische Gemüt des Amerikaners für unempfänglich für die Poesie und die schönen Künste zu halten. Wir haben uns an die von unsern Vorfahren ererbte Idee gewöhnt, die Amerikaner der Vereinigten Staaten für eine rührige, unternehmende, aber ausschliesslich für materielle Interessen bewegte Nation zu erklären. Es ist wahr, dass im Geiste





des Amerikaners sich die Idee des Schönen und Grossen vorzugsweise gern irgend eines practischen Nutzens verbindet. Die speculative Philosophie wird in diesem Lande nie besonders tief Wurzel schlagen." Here the Trancendental movement is described as being the indication "Dass dieser Boden universell und für alle Erzeugnisse empfänglich ist. Aber national werden diese Ideen nie werden." We must all admit the correctness of German judgment as to the great hindrance to the development of art as art, in poetry, music, and painting. Partly, it is the national self-love and partly and especially "die gänzliche Kritiklosigkeit. Die mittelmässigsten und die schönsten Gemälde, (also literary and musical productions) werden mit gleichem Enthusiasmus bewundert. Der blosse glückliche Tagesschriftsteller steht in einer Reihe mit dem wahren Genius, der Arbeiter mit dem Forscher, der Versemacher mit dem Dichter. This state of affairs, however, is not American solely. The same thing can be noticed in Germany especially in literature. American taste for music has degenerated, perhaps never was of high standard. The total absence of American Volkslieder is scarcely a matter of surprise for the American people are not a racial unit. The absence of a Volksgesang is more surprising. This leads the German to remark on a complete absence of the musical sense. The Germans are preeminently a musical people; the laborer sings at his work, the sailor at his oar, the soldier on the march, the mother to her child. From Mr. Castleton we get a good expression of the American opinion of the German. In speaking of his daughter Virginia's enthusiasm for German literature he says of German literature, "Schade nur dass diese so nebelig sei und der Unglaube so darin verherrsche, übrigens halte er sie für ein sehr achtbares Volk. Er habe nie fleissigere Leute gesehen. Und





die Musik sei unter ihnen zu Hause." Again from the lips of the typical New England farmer we have "Musik gewiss, (verstehen Sie) denn Sie sind ja ein Deutscher."

One of the great reason why the Germans in America have not accomplished more and made themselves a greater factor is that in coming to America they have sunk their German individuality and assumed the American. The American individuality is so very different from the German that the transition has rather worked toward a weakening of both. A great effort is being made at the present time to awaken this "Deutsches Gefühl", and by the awakening place the Germans in their true sphere as elements of culture here in America. Frau Talvj saw as early as 1852 when hosts of Germans had just arrived from the fatherland, the tendency on their part to lose their indentiy as Germans. However, the idea of a union of the Germans was fostered by the wisest in an attempt to make one of these United States a German state. But the attempt was largely a matter of words. The individual Heimat was more to them than a national Heimat, and so to-day we find the German element so scattered and so assimilated by the other elements that in many cases it is difficult to discover their identiy. When Hubert was looking around and considering a location for a home we find "auch er hatte sich, wie unendlich viele seiner Landsleute, lange mit der Idee eines deutschen Staates, als eines der Vereinigten Staaten getragen, aus- oder wenigstens hauptsächlich schliesslich, von Deutschen bevölkert und mit Erhaltung deutscher Sitte, Sprache, Denkungsart alle Vortheile der Freiheit und Unabhängigkeit der Union geniessend. Hier, wie zu Hause, scheitert die Einheit an dem Mangel an Gemeinsinn der Deutschen. In tausend Par-





eigungen zerspalten, ordnen sie hier, wie zu Hause, lieber dem Fremden sich unter, als die Ecken und Zacken des eigenen Sinnes in die des eigenen Bruders zu passen und so zum compacten Ganzen zu werden. Hubert sah es mit einem tief beschämenden schmerzlichen Gefühl. Er wünschte nicht ein neues Vaterland zu finden, nur eine Heimat für sich und die Geliebte die fern vom Vaterlande seine Welt war." The practice even then was contrary to the theory . For Hubert saw "manchen seiner Landsleute geehrt und Einflussreich; aber nur insofern er aufgehört hatte Deutscher zu sein und Amerikaner geworden war." With a home in view Hubert is changed from a man of dreams to a man of action; labor previously distasteful to him becomes sweet when savored with the thoughts of the holiest and dearest relations embodied in a home. When at last they reach Woodhill and the cottage their cup of joy seems filled to overflowing." Hubert war zum ersten Mal Hausherr, Klotilde wiederum Hausfrau geworden. Hand in Hand standen sie vor der Thür, gingen sie umher und zeigten einander mit freudestrahlenden Augen jeden lieblichen Einblick in das dichte Gebüsch.... Es war als wäre der heitere blaue Himmel selbst, der sich über ihnen wölbte, und ihr herrliche Sonne die ihnen alles im schönsten Lichte beleuchtete, ihr Eigenthum geworden."

One great strength of the book, it seems to me, is the fact that Frau Talvj through Klotilde did not in story book fashion bring about in the characters represented, the fulfillment of all of her ideals. Too often the force and power of good is lost in a story by having a wholesale yielding on the part of the characters to the ideals embodied. Human development does not work in straight lines and whether or not we are conscious of it, rapid and unimpeded pro-





gress toward the good, as so often portrayed in stories, has a negative effect. Frau Talvj understood how to contrast ideals in such a way so as to make the broader and better ideals stand out the more boldly because of the narrower ones. Hers was a method of suggestion. With a delicacy of touch and simplicity of style Frau Talvj has woven these German ideals into a story dealing with American conditions and American people. She has portrayed the rash and hot blooded southerner without incurring prejudice against him, the weak and impulsive girl without arousing disgust, the narrow and duty bound Christian without removing natural admiration for adherence to duty, and the German dreamer without causing us to lose sight of talent, strength and power in him.

One especial charm about the book, it seems to me, is that it portrays at a time when we find it least, the life within the circle of unrest then prevailing. We are given pictures, as it were, of individuals and their relations instead of general political and industrial conditions. During the period of development of any great situation the specific is often lost in the general. In "Die Auswanderer" we find a portrayal of the specific with a gradual interweaving and working into with the general to such an extent that in order to appreciate the book one must have a very good idea of prevailing conditions, that is prevailing cultural conditions. If the story as such were entirely without value, it would still be of infinite value as a foundation stone of American "Kulturgeschichte". No nation is richer in "Kulturgeschichten" than the German and it is reasonable to look to them as an impelling force in producing one for America.





Among her last stories is one entitled "Ein Bild aus seiner Zeit" written in 1868. Having passed through the heroic period of German history as well as the classical, she has begun this story in the golden time of poetry and philosophy and has ended it in the time of regeneration following the Wars of Liberation. A husband, poet, philosopher, and dreamer loses himself in admiration for a friend of his wife's, herself a wife. She seems to give him that intangible something which his thoroughly devoted but practical wife fails to give. In him we may see Germany, when, on the verge of forgetting the strength and power within her own nation, she seeks vainly after strength among the ancients, deluded almost to the point of self annihilation. Husband and adored one seek death together, believing life without each other impossible. In the arms of imitation Germany, too, was threatened with death. Even as the devoted wife rescued the husband so did the unquenchable loyal spirit of Germany rescue her own. What the Wars of Liberation did for Germany they did for the misguided husband-- restored him to his own. In the undying devotion and loyalty of the wife we see reflected the undying strength and power of German national feeling. The restoration of joy and happiness in the family circle broken by the empty allurements of a foreign element, symbolize the restoration of strength and peace to the German nation. "Ein Bild aus seiner Zeit" is a short story, but teeming with intensity both of action and feeling, coincident with the national action and feeling. In this portrayal we again meet the keen insight of an intelligent and sympathetic woman.



## Chapter IV.

## History.

Frau Talvj's main historical work was a History of the Colonization of New England written in 1847. In 1839 a similar work by George Bancroft had appeared. These two works stand almost alone during this portion of the nineteenth century, and so whatever comparisons may be made will be made between these two, largely. The points of view from which these two histories were written were entirely different. The history by Talvj was written entirely from a German point of view. About the time the book was finished Bancroft's history was translated into German. A quotation from Talvj's "Vorwort" characterizes Bancroft's work as well as expressing her own idea about her work. In speaking of Bancroft's translation she says, "Indessen umfasst jenes bedeutende Werk theils einen so viel grössern Zeitraum und einen so viel ausgedehntern Gegenstand überhaupt, dass das meine im Verhältnisse dazu nur etwa wie eine einzelne Kammer zu einem ganzen Hause dasteht; theils glaube ich, dass, während wir die geistreichen Ansichten eines entschiedenen Patrioten in jenem Werke nur bewundern können, ich insofern die Sympathie meiner Landsleute in Anspruch nehmen darf, dass ich Neu Englands Vorzeit mit liebevollen zwar, aber doch, wie sie, mit deutschen Augen sehe." She did not fail to see the little things which so many writers of history, carried away by national enthusiasm or writing to suit popular taste, fail to see. Small things, to her, held as important a place in the development of the country as large things.

Bancroft's point of view was that of the enthusiastic





American who saw in his country not only fulfillment of great things, but promises of even greater. Talvj saw this too, but her point of view being more concentrated, she brought in many details which an American historian would either not have considered or not have noticed. Both used chiefly as sources of information documents contemporaneous with the time under discussion. We find very nearly the same references in both histories. Bancroft goes into greater detail than Talvj in that part dealing with the discovery of America and the years following, up to the beginning of the sixteenth century. Among the same references in both histories for the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, we find Hakluyt, Chalmers, Belknap, Holmes, Stith, Smith, and Purchas Pilgrimage. These sources were obtained by both in magazine form from libraries and personal owners. It is not in this earlier history that a difference in view point would be very noticeable. Certain historical facts exist as such, and cannot be altered. Where Talvj differs in her view-point is in tracing the development of the great institutions which form the foundation of the nation, in her sympathetic attitude toward the Indian, and in her clearness in tracing the growth and development of the various churches. Before making any concrete comparisons of these main considerations, it would be well to compare the arrangement of material which these two authors made.

Talvj's arrangement is that of a writer of "Kulturgeschichte", Bancroft's that of a writer of a political history. After briefly setting forth the facts dealing with the discovery of America and early French, Spanish, and English explorations, she passes in her second chapter to a thorough consideration of the growth



and development of Puritanism. Going back to the days before the reformation, she follows the growth of Puritanism from the division of the Reformers into two parties down through the arrogances and despotism of the Episcopalian church, through the periods of supremacy of the Catholic church, through the despotism of the four last Tudors, through the divine right of kings, through the fanaticism of Mary, down to the subsequent heroic stand of the Puritans. This division had as its immediate result the colonization of New England. Believeing that an understanding of what gave rise to Puritanism, what sufferings and hardships its followers underwent prior to finding a refuge in America, essential to an understanding of their attitude here in America, she goes into minute details in regard to its growth. The details include a setting forth of such trivial points of difference which are found, as a general rule, not in an American history, but in a history of England. In this very point the view-point of the author calls notice unto itself. In order to have an intelligent understanding of the cause of Puritan settlements here in America, a knowledge of their development is necessary not from an English historians point of view but from the view-point of an American historian or from that of one whose sympathies are American. The growth of Puritanism and the settlement of its followers in America are too often unrelated subjects. Two long chapters are devoted to this growth and development of Puritanism into State Puritans and Church Puritans. Frau Talvj, realizing, no doubt, the rather unusual method of proceeding with an American history, says "Es ist hier nicht der Ort, die Geschichte der englischen Kirchenverbesserung umständlich zu erzählen; sie geht uns nur insofern an,





als sie gleich in ihrer ersten Entwicklung den Keim zum Zwiespalt in sich trug." With this discussion preceding, the fourth chapter takes up the hardships of the Pilgrims in their vain search for rest and religious freedom in Holland. Many of her authentic facts for this chapter are drawn from manuscript copies of Bradford's Chronicles. Bancroft takes up this phase of history in his eighth chapter. Quite as thorough a discussion of the rise and growth of Puritanism together with a discussion of the Pilgrims in Holland is given by him as a part of this chapter. In the fullness of the discussion Bancroft himself differs from more modern American historians. Preceding this chapter on Puritanism and Puritan settlements in America, Bancroft has dealt with and carried through the history of the colonization of Virginia and Maryland, besides giving a history of slavery and of the growth of the trade in America together with a history of restrictions on colonial commerce. This arrangement is due, however, to the greater size and scope of Bancroft's work. Talvj's history is an intense and concentrated study of New England history from 1492 to 1692, while Bancroft's is a general history of the United States, the first volume of which is devoted largely to New England. His whole history extends from 1492 to 1830. Talvj has arranged her chapters in regard to succession of years. In the various chapters, as the importance of events seems to demand, we find the development discussed extending over the time of from one to six and seven years. As far as the dates are concerned many of Bancroft's chapters overlap each other. His method is to follow a certain institution or settlement to its close or at least to an historical stopping point. Talvj weaves and interweaves now with





short threads and now with long as she goes along. Bancroft draws out and arranges all of the horizontal threads before joining them with the shorter connecting threads. Both strengthen the whole production by means of very nearly the same authorities.

American historical writings are of very recent birth.

Talvj tells us in her introduction, "Durch das ganze achtzehnte Jahrhundert schlummerte hier, wie überall, der Geist historischer Forschung. Reiche Dokumente lagen verstaubt und in nie gestörter Ruhe in öffentlichen Archiven oder Privatbibliotheken aufgehäuft. Unentzifferte Handschriften dienten als Packpapier; unschätzbare Exemplare von Originalwerken wurden als Makulatur benutzt." In the case of some few individuals the spirit of investigation was strongly manifested and concentrated, as for example in Thomas Prince. With a wonderful diligence and patience he gathered together material, and succeeded in presenting to the public a "Chronological History of New England" up to 1633. Callender, Backus, and especially Hutchinson gathered together very much material which in one way or another threw light upon the darkest periods of American history. Hutchinson's "History of Massachusetts" appeared toward the close of the Revolution. He was next to the last royal governor of Massachusetts and a leader of the Tory party. He had access to very authentic manuscript material but much that he had collected was lost or destroyed during the stamp act riots. A few words in regard to Talvj's sources of information will be of interest in as much as they were also Bancroft's, to a large extent.

Cotton Mather's "Ecclesiastical History" written during the seventeenth century is authentic but rather narrow in its point of view. This history also known as the "Magnalia Christi Americana"





extends over the period between 1620 and 1698. It is regarded as the most important book produced in America during the seventeenth century. It has been suggested that as a history it was unsatisfactory because he was too near to events to be strictly impartial. His personal feelings perhaps unconsciously colored his statements. In regard to his facts he is charged with being careless and inaccurate. However, his work is indispensable to an understanding of New England history.

The diary of William Bradford, governor of New England was at that time fragmentary and in manuscript form. Some fifty years after Talvj's time these manuscripts were collected and published. Much of the original material became a part of the church records of Plymouth through Nathaniel Morton a nephew of Bradford. Morton also used many of Bradford's accounts in his "New England's Memorial". Hutchinson and Prince both used much of the material also, and Frau Talvj succeeded in getting this, too. Many of the manuscripts were lost during the Revolution and have never been found, however what have been handed down are of infinite value.

The "New England's Memorial" by Morton was of great service especially after the notes and additions were made to it by John Davis in 1826.

Several small manuscripts by Edward Winslow, one of the first planters, were used.

Until 1790 John Winthrop's "History of New England" remained in manuscript form. Cotton Mather and Hubbard used it, the latter using much of it word for word without mentioning the source. One of Hutchinson's chief authorities was Hubbard. In 1790 the



part dealing with the history of Massachusetts was published under the title of "A Journal of the Transactions and Occurrences in the Settlement of Massachusetts." Not until 1825 ~~1825~~ was the entire collection of Winthrop given<sup>to</sup> the public. James Savage published it under its correct title "The History of New England by John Winthrop" Frau Talvj considers him her leader in the history of the period, 1630 to 1649.

The personal letter of the Vice-governor Thomas Dudley to the Countess of Lincoln, patroness of the colonies, contained material in regard to the main settlements in Massachusetts.

Edward Johnson's history of New England appeared in 1654 under the title of "Wonder-working Providence of Zions Savior." Its chief value lay in the fact that the author was an eye witness and co-worker in the affairs of the country. However, its style is weak and difficult of reading because of a rather foolish and artificial piety running through the whole. In 1658 it was plagiarized by Ferdinand Gorges and published as the work of Gorges grandfather under the title, "America painted to Life, a true History."

Higginson, Wood, Weldé, Lechford, Josselyn, and others were the sources of numerous smaller manuscripts and letters, partly about individual circumstances, and partly about impressions of all the settlers and settlements.

"Chronicles of the first Planters of the Colony of Massachusetts from 1623 to 1636" appeared too late to be of very much use in Frau Talvj's history.

Sir Ferdinand Gorges was never in America, but in as much as he was one of the first undertakers and founders of the Plymouth Company his work, "Brief Narration of the original Undertakings and





and the Advancement of the Plantations", was of value as showing the Englishman's theories and plans for American settlements.

Mason, Underhill, Gardiner, and Vincent contributed much to American historical information by means of their accounts of the Indian wars.

The history of Providence and Rhode Island depends almost entirely on rather imperfect accounts of the first founder. Clark, Gorton, and Roger Williams contributed to this by numerous letters and small manuscripts.

As regards the settlement in Connecticut, with the exception of a very few letters, there is really no authentic contemporaneous account. The governmental chronicles and various church archives of later times have furnished practically all of the historical information about Connecticut. "A general History of Connecticut", published in 1781, contains the truth so veiled in fiction and falsehood that it is of little value as a history. Frau Talvj says of this book, "Nichts kann für die damals in England Amerika herrschende Stimmung charakteristischer sein, als dass dieses elende Nachwerk schon im folgenden Jahre eine neue Auflage erlebte."

In criticism of all these sources Frau Talvj feels the absence of individual points of view and judgment. Neal's history of New England is little more than a working over of Cotton Mather's in a purer style. Chalmers alone of English historians is an authority on New England.

Bancroft in speaking of these various sources says, "I have endeavored to impart originality to my narrative, by deriving it from writings and sources which were the contemporaries of the events that are described." Bancroft and Talvj stand almost alone,



not only as early historians but as writers of authentic histories. The early writers in Europe had little or no knowledge of the political institutions of the different colonies, nor was such knowledge deemed necessary. The prejudice against America was such as to make perverted and false statements more acceptable than facts. Many errors circulated by these careless early historians remain to-day as authentic facts.

As has been mentioned elsewhere, Frau Talvj's attitude towards the Indian was one of unusual humanity. In dealing with the Indians and the part they played in early American history, she does not make any attempt whatsoever to excuse their cruelty and seeming heartlessness. She does not, however, fail to see both sides in the history of cruel massacres, nor does she absolve the white man from all blame in the matter. In relating the history of the settlement of Connecticut an instance of white man's cruelty is given which, it must be admitted, is the equal of any Indian cruelty. In most cases the Indian was pursuing the one and only law of life known to him, self-preservation. We can hardly say the same for the white man, as the following instance shows. During the war with the Indians in 1637, after surprising the Indians in their fortification, Mason set fire to a wigwam which, spreading rapidly among the dry underbrush burned them out like so many rats. Escape was absolutely impossible. The few who did escape the flames fell into the hands of the English as prisoners. In the division of prisoners later, a dispute arose over the ownership of four women. In order to settle the dispute the four women were executed. Hutchinson speaks of this crime in the following words, "die Klugheit wie die Moralität dieser Massregel konnte wohl in Zweifel gezogen werden." "So hatte", as





Frau Talvj remarks, "der Amerikaner noch vor hundert Jahren sich gewöhnt, von einem blossen Indianerleben zu denken." Was it very different from the state of affairs in Rome under Nero, Caesar, and other tyrants whose deeds of cruelty we shudder to recall?

It was quite possible for the white man to conciliate the Indians not merely for the purpose<sup>of</sup> immediate protection and safety, but also for the sake of developing the Indians themselves. Edward Winslow, Frau Talvj tells us, made himself a friend of the Indian, whose education and conversion to Christianity became his main business, and it was through his influence chiefly that a company in England was incorporated by an act of parliament for the spreading of the gospel among the Indians of New England. The Indians were never slow to appreciate justice. In the case of Winthrop, by a strict adherence to the demands of justice both from the whites and from the Indians, he gained the undying respect and confidence of the latter. Histories generally narrate the instances of how the confidence and good will of the Indians were gained, but usually, perhaps because of too great bias in favor of the white man, they seem to throw all of the blame on to the Indian when such confidence is betrayed. Talvj thoroughly appreciated an element of treachery in the Indian nature, but again and again she shows up the white man as being the cause of the Indian's treachery.

A great point of difference between Talvj's history and Bancroft's is the point of emphasis. Talvj lays great emphasis on settlements as a whole, dwelling at length on the customs, religious views, and the development of laws and regulations out of their inner life and nature, while Bancroft, perhaps because of the greater scope of his work, sets forth great monumental figures in the early his-





tory of New England and focuses the minor developments in these. In Bancroft we have certain mountain peaks before our mental eyes; in Talvj we survey the whole as a level plain or plateau, we may say, formed on the vast mountain chain of the life, customs, and manners of the people as a whole. The Puritan form of religion does not stand out as boldly as do the causes for such a form. Hers is a correlation of causes rather than of results. Hers is a history of colonial spirit rather than of colonial activity. By this I mean, the colonial spirit gave rise to the colonial activity. Her history contains the elements of a "Kulturgeschichte" more than of a political history. Just as in any organization spirit and loyalty must be aroused before deeds may ensue, so in the settlement of a new country, the spirit and loyalty of its settlers determine the extent of the activities. Let us consider the last chapter in Talvj's history and see how clearly she shows this to be true.

The last part of the seventeenth century was one of confusion and inactivity. "Eine gedrückte niedergeschlagene Stimmung herrschte im ganzen nördlichen und östlichen Teile von Neu England" she tells us. The navigation acts and impressments had pauperized the land; the taxes were intolerable and likewise unpaid; the borders were being drained to the very marrow of the land by treacherous and dishonorable Indian wars; chains bound the country on all sides. Added to all this plague and sickness were robbing the country of its physical strength. "Aber", says Talvj, "das ärgste Uebel war eine gewisse Krankhafte Stimmung der Seelen, die sich der Masse des Volkes bemächtigt und den Wahn unter ihnen erzeugt hatte,





vom Himmel um ihrer Sünden willen verlassen zu sein, ja die Sage im Volke verbreitete, dass der Teufel in Person unter ihnen los sei." Like an attack of insanity at this time a portion of New England became possessed of this idea. Neither science nor the principles of the Reformation could stem the tide. It gripped as with a vice the very bone and marrow of New England manhood, and sapped the very strength from church, home, and state. The record of superstitious beliefs and fears is almost beyond comprehension. The bloody decrees of the tribunals were inhuman. Bancroft, Frau Talvj says, imbued with the idea of the moral inability to fail of a sovereign people would free the people of the blame for a temporary yielding to a belief in witchcraft. He lays especial emphasis on the fact that the judges were not chosen from the people as formerly, but appointed by a royal governor. However, as Talvj sees it, these were the same men whom the people had previously chosen repeatedly for judges. The sacrifice of six victims by the bloody decree of one tribunal might better be regarded as a moral blindness on the part of all the people than as a confession to having resigned judgment into the hands of a few when honor and life were at stake. Favoritism on every hand went unnoticed. This state of affairs continued until gradually the veil of superstition was raised from the eyes of the people. Those who wilfully and maliciously had been fostering the belief in witchcraft and demons realized that a sane spirit was returning to the people and desisted. Health was restored to the spirit and mind and with this restoration came energy, ambition, and activity. The moral atmosphere was cleared as is the physical atmosphere after a thunderstorm, and the spirit of





independence came back into its own. It was in America "die Zeit des Wurzelschlagens, des Einsaugens von Nahrungstoff aus der Erde und Luft."

The only other historical work of Talvj's which could be obtained at this time was an essay on John Smith which appeared in "Raumer's Historisches Taschenbuch" in 1845. This essay contains nothing different from the usual accounts of John Smith. It is a very full account based entirely on Smith's own records. At the present time there exist two factions of John Smith followers, those who accept the Pocahontas story and those who do not. Talvj did not seem to question it but enters it into her narrative with all the circumstances usually connected with it in other accounts. This history of John Smith was written entirely for the sake of informing her native countrymen in regard to this interesting bit of American history. She does not, as in the history of the colonies, pass judgment or give her own views. It is, we may say, a narrative for the purpose of narration only. It did not enter into her history in as much as the history of the Virginia settlement was not a part of her history.

The fact that it has been impossible to find a review or even an account of Talvj's history is inexplicable. If for no other reason, it might be supposed that because it was one of the very few histories of America written as early as 1850, it would have received prominent mention. But aside from this claim to public recognition, it justly demands recognition even to-day as a scientific investigation and treatment of a period around and about which has been woven a web of rumors and reports, many of which are





pure fiction. The facilities for keeping records were not to be compared with the present facilities and mistakes, even unintentional, were bound to creep in. It must needs be a keen mind which can get back of these reports, many of them fictitious and piecemeal, and discover great causal relations. To make a chronological record of events as such does not require a keen intellect nor a scientific mind. Patience and industry may accomplish all that is needed for such a record. It is hoped upon further investigation to discover some record or review of this work as much for the sake of crediting American reviewers with good judgment in recognizing a book of real worth, as for the sake of giving Frau Talvj the credit due to her as a contributor to America's historical knowledge of the colonization of New England.



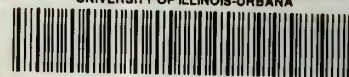








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